MARCH 1964

Commentary

VOLUME THIRTY-SEVEN, NUMBER THREE

LIBERALISM AND THE NEGRO

A Round-Table Discussion

JAMES BALDWIN
NATHAN GLAZER
SIDNEY HOOK
GUNNAR MYRDAL

The Oswald Affair by Léo Sauvage

A WEDDING IN BROWNSVILLE—A Story: Isaac Bashevis Singer

PEACE IN OUR TIME?: Hans. J. Morgenthau

AUTEUR! AUTEUR!: Marion Magid

MAURICE SAMUEL & JEWISH LETTERS: Robert Alter

BOOKS IN REVIEW

George P. Elliott — Theodore Solotaroff
R. S. Baker — Warren Coffey — Ronald Steel

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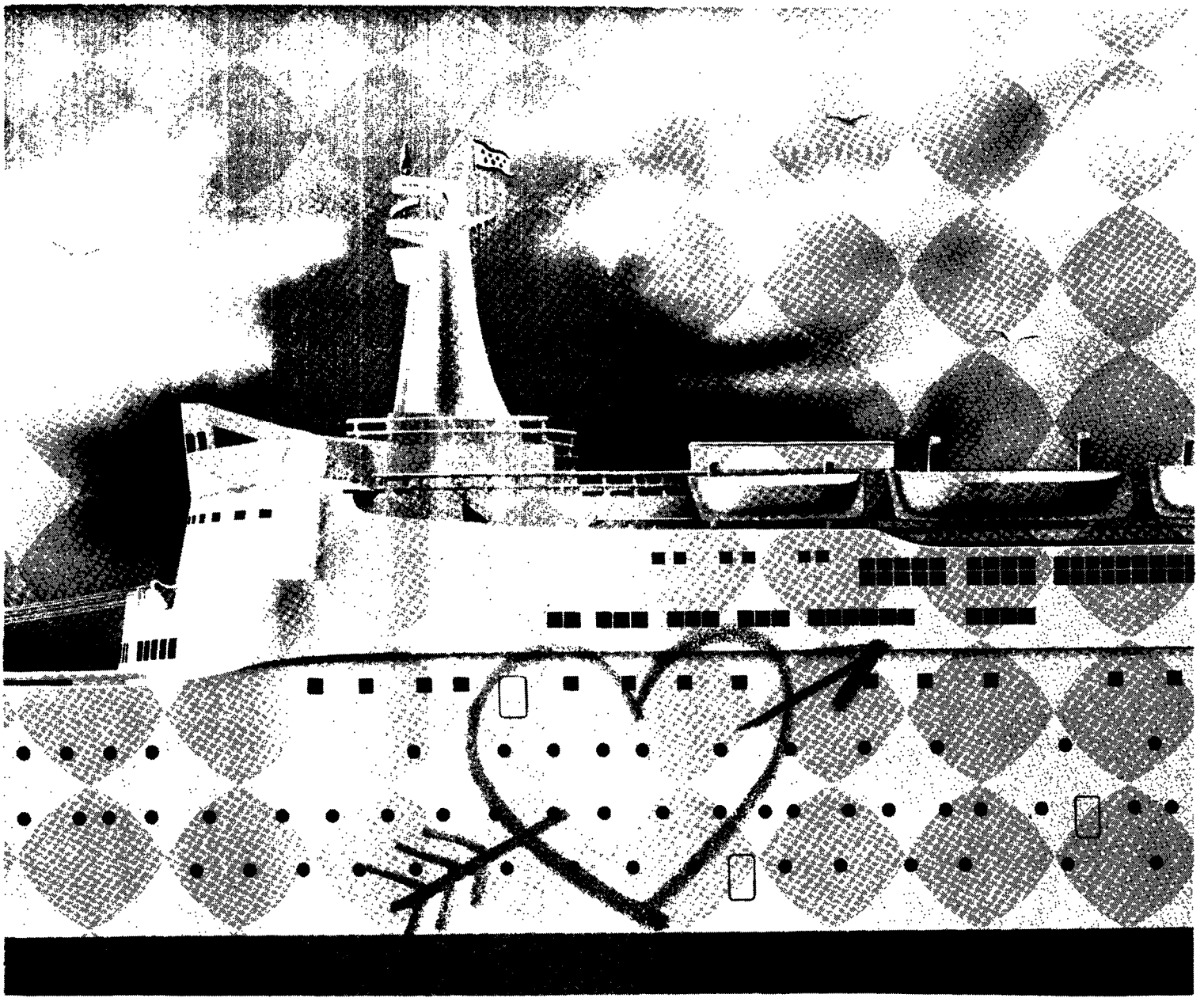

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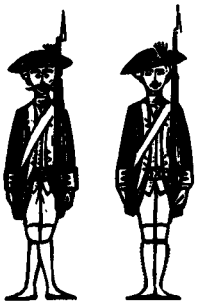

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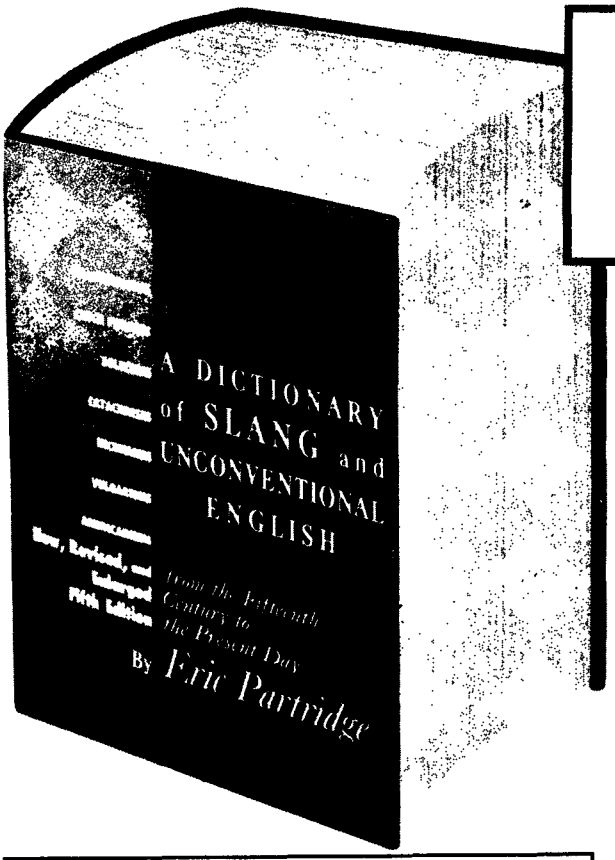

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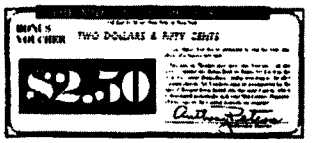

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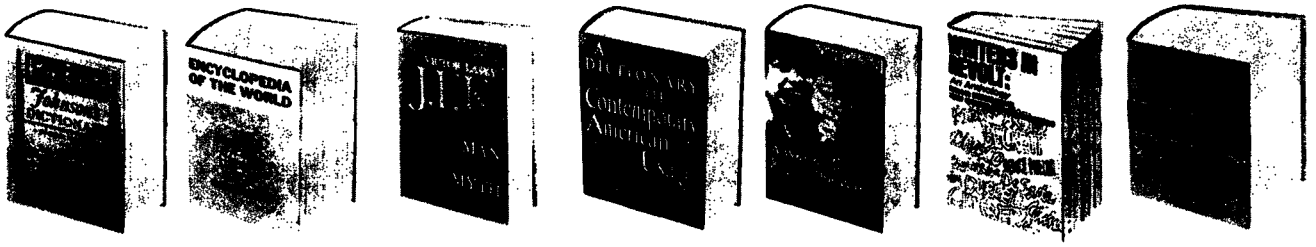

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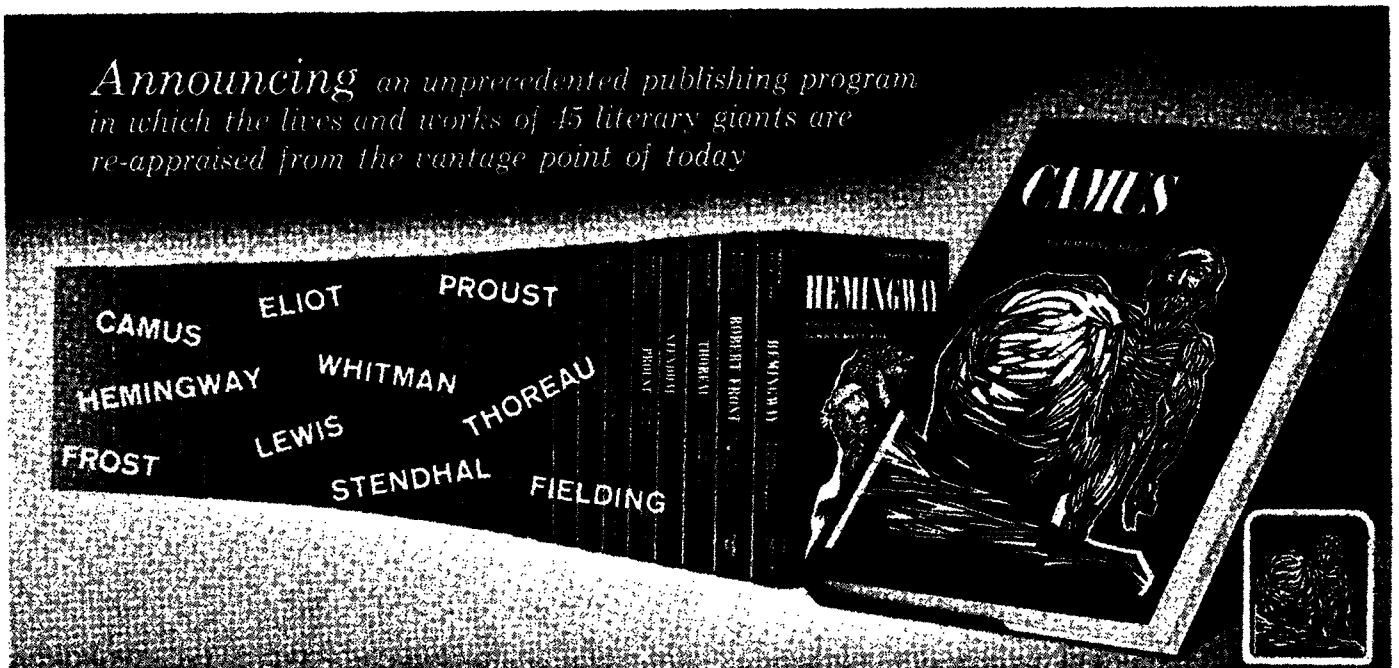

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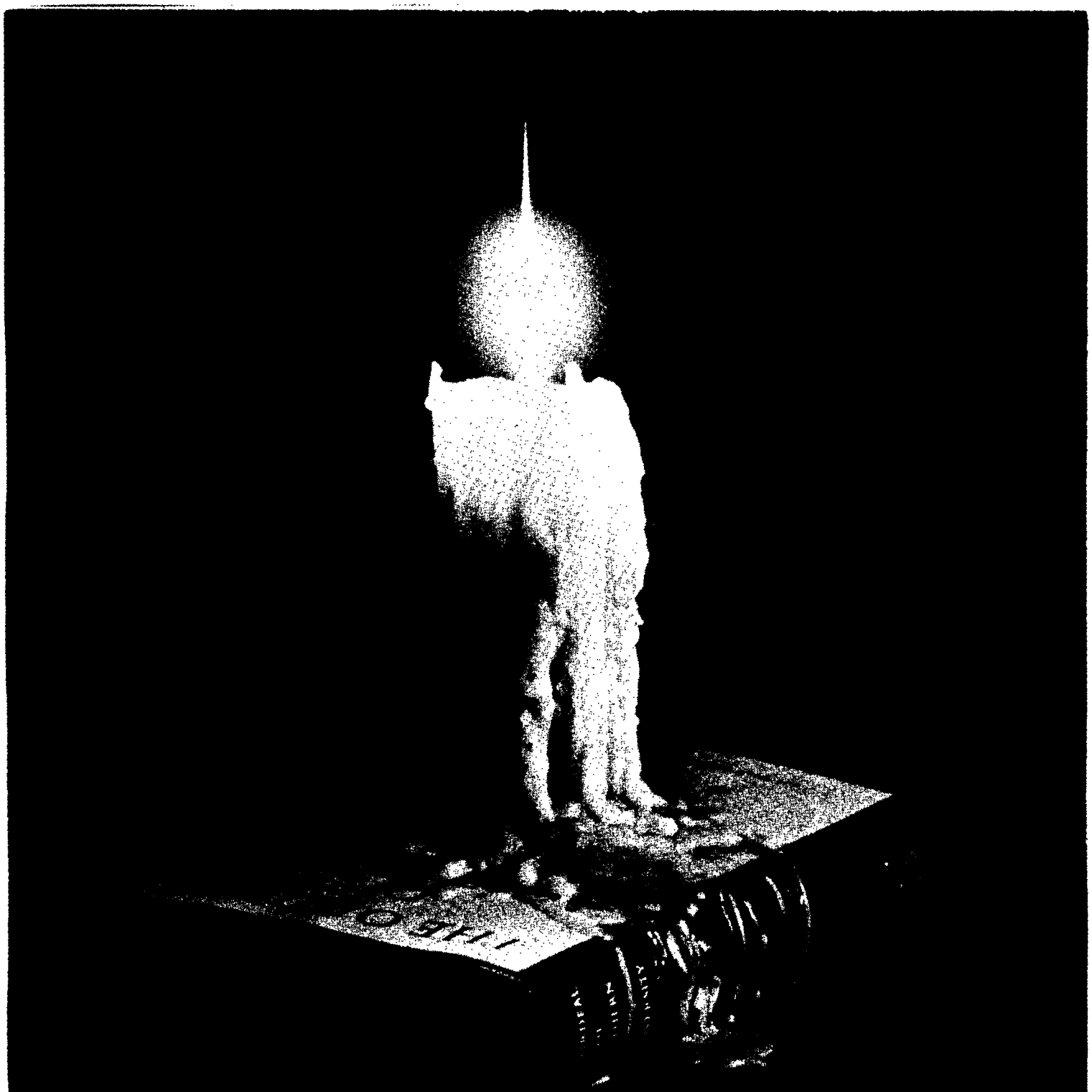

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A reviewer is entitled to his opinions, tastes, and possibly prejudices, but surely he has no right to misrepresent the contents of the book under review; to alter its meaning by misquoting; to denounce the author for opinions and conclusions which are not to be found there (nor in his other writings) . . . . Sometimes overtly, more often by innuendo, Theodore Frankel [in his review of *The Survivors,* Nov. '63] ascribes to me opinions which only a Nazi apologist or a mentally deranged person could hold, and which are the opposite of my own . . . . His review amounts to a slur upon my personal and professional integrity. . . . Space permits me to answer only a few of these misrepresentations.

(1) Mr. Frankel ascribes to me the almost incredible assertion that "even Auschwitz has its silver lining," citing, by way of proof, one half of my quotation of the reply of a survivor to her eight-year-old daughter's question about what a concentration camp was: ("Something like a vacation resort, but not so much fun"). But Mr. Frankel suppresses the woman's explanation of this seemingly strange remark: "I do not want my daughter to be shocked and hurt by knowledge of the horrors. I want her to grow up in a normal world as a normal child." Whether this mother's reasoning was right or wrong, it seemed worth reporting as one among many different reactions of German Jews to the Nazi past which, as my book states, "range from an attempt to forget to an almost obsessional recall." While I point out that none of these is typical, Mr. Frankel claims that one among them is "typical of Mr. Muhlen's approach," and jumps from there to the outrageous conclusion that I see a silver lining even in Auschwitz.

(2) Mr. Frankel claims further that my book "makes its apology for the German past by the simple Victorian expedient of lacking words for anything really bad." The subject of my book is not the German—i.e., Nazi—past, about which I have written often before, and with which better writers than I have dealt, but the Jewish-German present: as the title clearly states, and as I noted in the Foreword, my theme was the fate of the "tiny fraction of the faceless figure of the Six Million whose obituary has been written in blood and whose memory will be forever mourned." Therefore, I open my book with what "really" is the worst of the Nazi past, Hitler's last command to destroy the Jews; and I refer to the crimes of persecution and mass murder throughout the book whenever this is warranted.

(3) Discussing the restitution and reparations agreements of the Adenauer government with the Jewish organizations, an important chapter in present-day German-Jewish relations, I pointed out that these payments are not only due the Jewish survivors "to right the wrongs done . . .," but whatever their extent, tragically inadequate. Mr. Frankel, however, insinuates that my enumeration of German payments "is bound to prejudice the reader against the Jew," who—the words as well as the innuendoes of this outrageous thought are Mr. Frankel's—appears "greedy" and "insatiably rapacious."

I resent this sinister insinuation, particularly since I pride myself on having contributed, though in an extremely small measure, to the restitution agreements. In September 1951, I cabled from Bonn to the editor of COMMENTARY, the late Elliot Cohen, whom I was privileged to call my friend, that Chancellor Adenauer in an off-the-record interview had told me that he was eager to enter into restitution agreements with the representatives of all the Jewish organizations. Elliot Cohen, as he later informed me, relayed my message to the American Jewish Committee for further action. Rather than describe this personal episode, I quote in my book the words in which Adenauer, shortly thereafter, assured Nahum Goldmann of his recognition of Germany's moral as well as financial debt to the Jews. My quoting of this important statement appears, in Mr. Frankel's words, as a "device of trying to make the Germans look better by making the Jews look bad." Mr. Frankel's innuendo of anti-Jewish bias, with-

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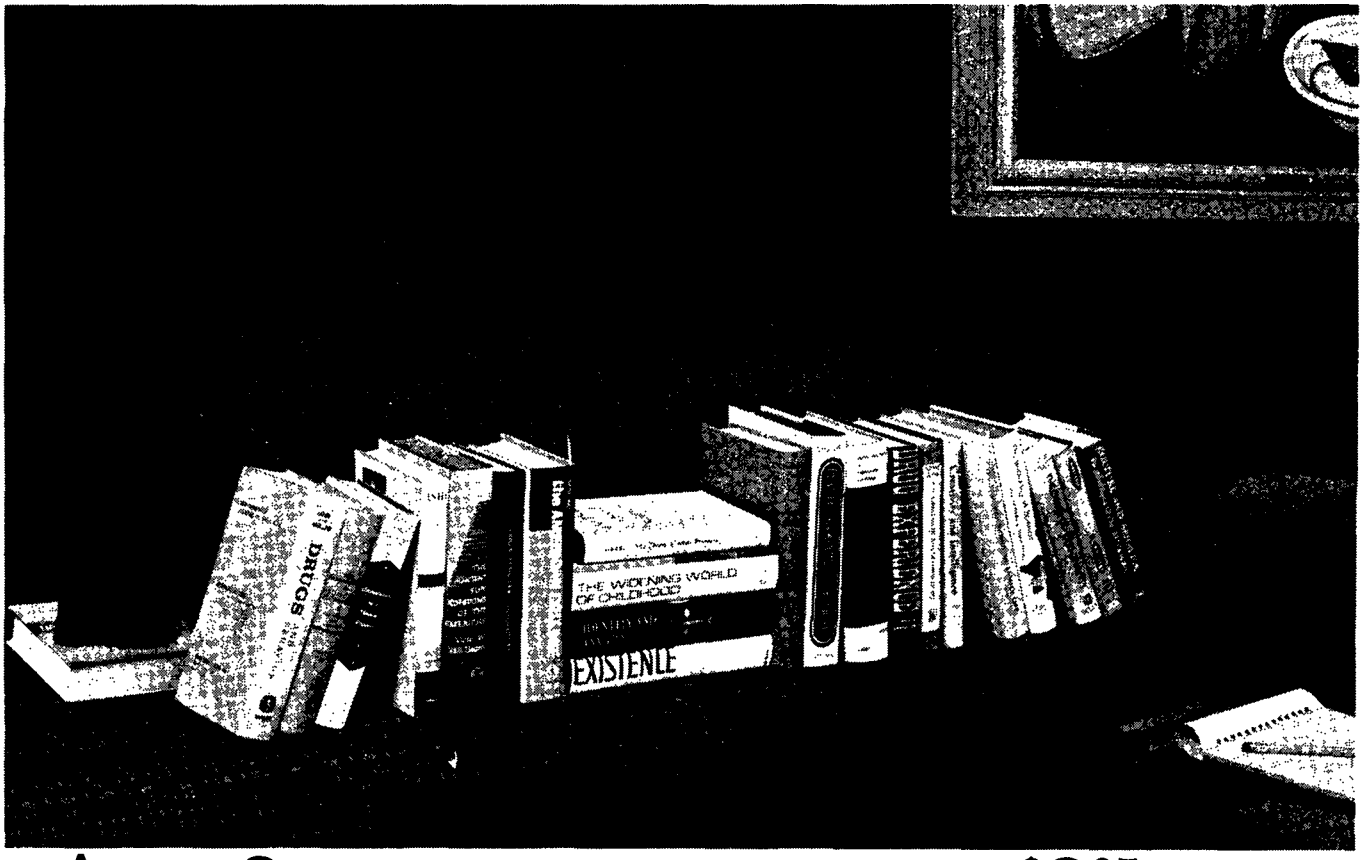

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out the slightest factual foundation, is tantamount to character assassination.

(4) Mr. Frankel denounces my denial of any importance to neo-Nazi groups in present-day Germany, a conclusion at which I arrived after fifteen reportorial tours of postwar Germany (though I am aware, of course, of the survival of individual Nazis and anti-Semites in Germany—a whole chapter of my book is devoted to evaluating them—and though I advocate vigilance against their doings). To expose this "whitewash," he points to the case of former Admiral Doenitz, a convicted war criminal and Hitler's official successor, who "was invited to address the graduating class of a German high school." Knowing the facts of this case, I admit that I would not have presented it as evidence of Nazi group influence even if it had happened before, rather than after, my book went to press: for Doenitz—not unlike such Nazi or Communist spokesmen as George Lincoln Rockwell or Gus Hall in this country—was invited to give a lecture to the contemporary history class of what by American standards would be junior college students. The German public protested against this invitation, and if I were a German, I would have joined in this protest, but I surely would not have considered it an indication of Nazi power or influence.

(5) Mr. Frankel repeatedly uses the device of falsifying my quotations in order to change their meaning. He censures me for writing, in my Foreword, that the epitaph of Hitler's Jewish victims could be that "they did not die in vain"—but he suppresses the second and key half of the sentence: "If—and this is a big 'if'—the world learns a lesson from their fate."

A good part of Mr. Frankel's review is devoted to an alleged résumé of my article published in *Der Monat* which was, as he does not mention, translated from an article published in the American quarterly, *Modern Age;* by quoting out of context, he misrepresents its contents no less than those of my book.

(6) Not even the complete title of my book is given correctly by the reviewer. He omits mention of the Introduction by Professor Hans Kohn. Could this be because the eminent historian, one of American's most respected authorities on modern German-Jewish history . . . calls my book an "authoritative study, presented with all the impartiality that such a controversial question demands"?

(7) Mr. Frankel censures my "high-minded hope that the Jewish community in Germany will experience a new birth of vitality." What, in fact, I wrote was merely that "it is still too early to answer the question of whether or not there will be a Jewish revival in Germany," and that "German-Jewish regeneration does not seem altogether impossible," which is, of course, not at all what Mr. Frankel tells the readers I wrote. I admit that I would be personally gratified by such a revival; in my book, I merely tried to tell Americans—as a reporter who reports the facts as he finds them—how Jews live in Germany today. If my findings lack the bright colors of happiness, as I concluded in my book, fortunately they are not all black, either.

NORBERT MUHLEN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . To disagree with an author's point of view is a reviewer's privilege. . . . But to say of a book written by a man who has himself been subjected to Nazi persecution, that its sole purpose was to "whitewash the Germans" for their crimes in the past . . . is an outrageous statement . . .

It may still be difficult or even impossible for a Jew at this moment to discuss the German problem "objectively." Any response, from silent hostility to eternal hatred, should be . . . respected as an all-too-human reaction to a traumatic experience beyond words. But another attitude is also possible . . . the searching spirit, the passion for truth and justice in the Jewish heritage which brought about the Ten Commandments as well as the writings of Freud and Marx and Buber . . . It is the opposite of what anti-Semites attribute to the Jews when they talk about the Jewish "God of Vengeance."

One may disapprove of Norbert Muhlen's readiness to plunge into the ambiguities of German-Jewish relations at a time when nobody knows what may happen next . . . (although my own experiences in postwar Germany seem to corroborate Muhlen's rather carefully worded observations). But this is not the point. What I object to is the character assassination of a writer whose honesty and integrity should be obvious even to a re-

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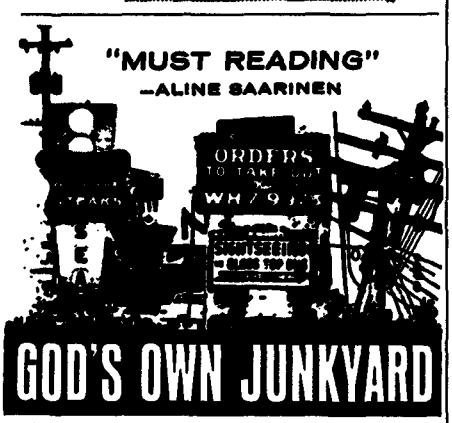

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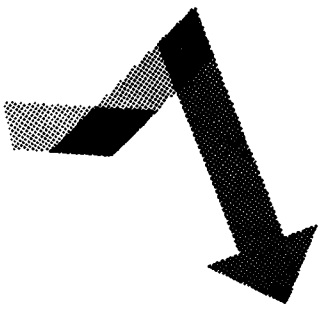

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viewer who seemed to have read this book only to find what he wanted to read *into it*.

HANS SAHL
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I agree, in substance, with Mr. Frankel's evaluation of Muhlen's attitude, though only the most objective appraisal of such writings can be helpful . . . . I regret therefore that to illustrate Muhlen's "rapturous, simpering, effusive language," Mr. Frankel quotes as an example only one half of the reply of a Jewish woman in Hamburg who upon being asked by her eight-year-old daughter what a concentration camp was, replied "something like a vacation resort but not so much fun." In fairness to Mr. Muhlen, Mr. Frankel should have included the second half of the quote as well . . . .

As to Mr. Frankel's citation of the "very good record of the German courts in putting more than 5000 Nazi criminals behind bars," he is as much mistaken as Mr. Muhlen. Only recently the German counterpart of our National Conference on Christians and Jews (the late Theodor Heuss was the honorary president of this organization) published a memorandum showing that Nazi criminals (among them murderers) had been given mild prison sentences similar to those pronounced against embezzlers, burglars, and thieves. The memorandum rightly says that the German people is in danger of viewing murders against Jews, Russians, Poles, and gypsies as a lesser crime than other violations of the penal code.

In this connection, Mr. Muhlen should be reminded that Dr. Erwin Schuele, Head of the Central Office for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes acknowledged that German witnesses often do not like to cooperate with Schuele's office. "They even may lie to us by saying certain people sought by us have long since died. If we always believed them we could have closed our office a month after it opened because of lack of work."

Space does not permit listing the many factual errors Muhlen made in his earlier book, *The Vanishing Swastika*, and now makes again in *The Survivors*. I share Frankel's view of his "lack of insight or sympathy" and his continuous . . . simplification and degradation of tragic events. Muhlen . . . does not comprehend apparently that in this way he does a great disservice to the German people and at the same time dishonors the victims of Nazi persecution. . . .

As one who published the first book dealing with the help given by German Christians to Jews during the Hitler years, I believe that our relationship to Germany can be based only on these principles:

German history must be judged objectively without the kind of public relations angle represented by a recent hearing [May 14, 1963] before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations which featured the testimony of Major General Julius Klein—an example of how not to deal with the new Germany.

We as the survivors of the holocaust should evaluate present-day Germany not on the basis of personalities, but by facts and deeds.

We should by all means encourage the forces of decency and democracy, in other words *the other Germany* which exists but does not yet rule. . . .

KURT R. GROSSMANN
Kew Gardens, New York

MR. FRANKEL *writes*:

Mr. Muhlen specifically cites seven major misrepresentations. Let us examine them:

(1) He states that I ascribe to him the assertion that Auschwitz has its silver lining. Not so. What I claim is that his disingenuous and cloying style conveys that impression to the reader by indirection. For proof I cited not the half-quote about the Jewish woman from Hamburg, but the entire quote concerning Frau Renate Lasker-Schueler who "has often described her Auschwitz experiences in a warm, moving appeal." If a warm, moving appeal about an *abattoir* like Auschwitz, delivered to millions of German TV listeners, is not a silver lining, what is it?

The half-quote on which Mr. Muhlen concentrates his fire was meant as supporting evidence for the fatuousness to his approach. If I did not give the anecdote *in toto*, it was because I thought the mother's motivation self-explanatory, and still do. What was *not* self-explanatory was Mr. Muhlen's lack of comment in the book.

Furthermore, my contention that these two anecdotes are typical of Mr. Muhlen's approach is not disproved by his disclaimer that the people and reactions described by him are not typical (incidentally, if they are not typical why include them?). One need only read Mr.

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Muhlen's little jokes on the subject of Jewish oversensitivity to realize just how well they represent his style.

(2) Mr. Muhlen denies my contention that his book makes an apology for the German past on the grounds that this time he was writing about the German present only. To begin with, the very attempt to establish a German present without a German past is a species of apology. Second, it simply is not true that Mr. Muhlen does not deal in the book with the Nazi past; as I showed in my review, he refers to it repeatedly. The trouble is he works a little too hard at accentuating the positive, as in his remark that "some Germans approved active anti-Semitism and others did not." Unfortunately, Mr. Muhlen's "rebuttal" of my article does not address itself to refuting such specific evidence. Instead, he makes part of his defense the fact that he opened his book with what was "really the worst of the Nazi past" by referring to Hitler's 1945 order to destroy the Jews. I am afraid here, too, he proves nothing but his alarming lack of understanding, for surely the worst of Nazism was not the post-factum order by a single man (how convenient if it were), but the long horror perpetrated by hundreds of thousands which preceded it.

(3) Turning to Mr. Muhlen's account of restitution (and leaving aside his personal contribution to that effort in the past), I can only reiterate that I find his present treatment odious. To be sure, he remarks somewhere in the book that German restitution is morally inadequate, but his anecdote tells a different story. And, as Mr. Muhlen well knows, in a book designed for popular consumption—and *The Survivors* clearly is—it's the human interest story that sticks in the mind, long after the qualifications are forgotten, particularly when they are placed elsewhere in the text.

As for the innuendo of rapaciousness in the story of K.B., let the reader judge who placed it there. It was not I who picked just this story of a victim whose parents died natural deaths and who spent his time in peaceable exile, when there are at hand much more typical cases numbering in the hundreds of thousands of people asking for restitution whose relatives were butchered in the most inhuman fashion and who, in their own flesh, experienced the most excruciating torture and humiliation.

Concerning the Adenauer-Goldmann exchange, I guess there is no way of penetrating Mr. Muhlen's obtuseness and proving to him how insulting his version is, not only to Dr. Goldmann but to ex-Chancellor Adenauer as well.

(4) Mr. Muhlen either does not consider what I have to say about his statements on remaining Nazi influences or twists it. I cited specific evidence concerning Nazi influence in the judiciary, the administration, and one of the security services to contradict his sweeping whitewash on this count. All of this he blandly disregards to concentrate instead on the Doenitz affair. He compares the invitation tendered to Hitler's official successor to address as guest of honor a captive audience of German *Gymnasiasten* with the American academic custom of inviting in turn representatives from all political groups to expose themselves to debate and critical free-for-all before audiences prepared for these occasions. This analogy not only misleads the reader concerning the Doenitz case but also insults an American institution embodying free speech. If inviting Doenitz is really "not unlike" the American custom cited, why would Mr. Muhlen protest were he a German?

(5) Mr. Muhlen charged me with repeated falsification of his statements and quoting out of context. Naturally, since no reviewer can give anything but excerpts, it is easy to charge that one is quoted out of context. Mr. Muhlen submits for evidence only one such item under his fifth point, his truncated cliché that the six million Jews "did not die in vain" from which I deleted the second part "if . . . the world learns a lesson from their fate." I submit that the vulgarity of this bromide is not altered one whit by being quoted in its entirety instead of by halves. For God's sake, let's have no more about the beneficial pedagogic after-effects of the murder of our parents and relatives.

Since Mr. Muhlen cites no proof for my alleged misrepresentations of his article in *Der Monat* I shall do no more than assure the reader that my résumé was a restrained paraphrase of what struck me as a particularly nasty little job. Frankly, I had not realized that I was dealing with a translation since the blurb in *Der Monat* . . . , stated only that an English version *"mit*

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annaehernd gleichem Wortlaut" (with approximately the same text) —whatever that may mean—was being published in *Modern Age*. In any case, I can't see what earthly difference it makes. What counts is surely that a German audience was told of an alleged anti-German campaign for which the blame was attached to "left-wing radicals and relatively small but influential groups with anti-German prejudices." The very combination of words gave me goose pimples; that Mr. Muhlen characterized that influential minority as "part of the American reading public" did absolutely nothing to soothe me.

(6) Mr. Muhlen has me on not giving the full title of his book. For the record it is: *The Survivors: A Report on the Jews in Germany Today*. However, Mr. Muhlen is in no position to be overly severe on such trivia, since he is not exactly immune on this score himself. For example, he twice confused the Communist magazine, *Mainstream*, with the Zionist publication *Midstream*. I am glad, however, that he raised the question of the Introduction. It gives me a welcome opportunity to express my astonishment at Professor Kohn's endorsement of the book.

(7) Finally, Mr. Muhlen rebukes me for reporting that he entertains high-minded hopes for a new rebirth of vitality for the German Jews and claims more modest expectations. For once, it is really a question of judgment. Mr. Muhlen can point to sentences like "It is still too early to answer the question of whether or not there will be a Jewish revival in Germany." On the other hand, so diffuse is his treatment that I can point to the general air of hopefulness wafting through the final chapter, . . . the discussion of how fertile German soil has always been for the development of Jewish culture, the remark that the return of tens of thousands of Jews to Germany is one of the more hopeful events of our time, the argument that Germany's own enlightened self-interest makes an influx of Jews desirable. Of the various utterances of prominent Germans on this point, the clincher was no doubt the statement, "I hope Jews will again take responsible places in German life, as they did after the emancipation," confided to Mr. Muhlen in August 1961 by the co-author of the Nuremberg Racial Code, Dr. Hans Globke (*The Survivors*, etc., p. 211).

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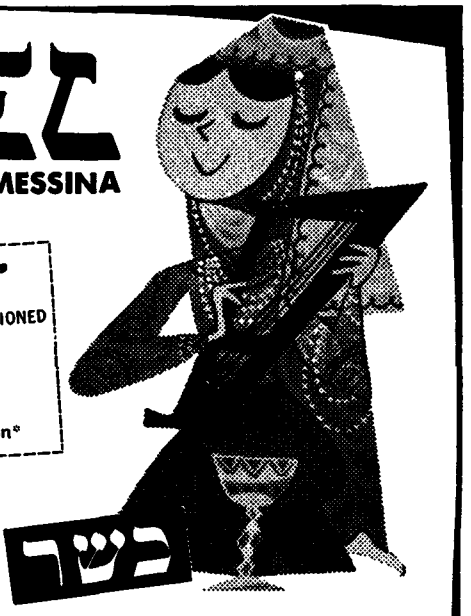

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Dr. Grossmann calls for no extended reply. I am pleased that he agrees with and extends my main thesis. As far as the quote from the Hamburg survivor is concerned, I have made my position clear in my answer to Mr. Muhlen. Concerning the record of the German courts: I feel it is better than the length of the sentences indicates, since the trials often take place in an atmosphere not entirely conducive to detached judgment (I am afraid I am catching Muhlen's style). Moreover, a number of recent verdicts have imposed longer sentences, possibly as a result of the memorandum referred to by Dr. Grossmann.

One final word: I should like to caution American readers against confusing Mr. Muhlen's vicarious obtuseness with what responsible Germans think and say. Certainly, German intellectuals, writers, artists, government officials and parliamentarians like Böll, Köppen, Hochhuth, Piscator, Professors Eschenburg and Schmid, Dr. Gerstenmeier and Professor Böhm and many more in all walks of life present an image of German self-awareness that is radically different from the picture projected by Mr. Muhlen.

Explaining Deviance

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In concluding his otherwise favorable review of Howard S. Becker's *Outsiders* [November '63], Harris Dienstfrey finds the author's analysis of deviants inadequate because it avoids "any investigation of the reasons they come to behave as they do." It seems to me that in imputing to Becker the assumption that deviance "needs no causal explanation," Mr. Dienstfrey falls into a trap the author is at great pains to expose—the belief that the *real* "explanation" or "cause" of deviance can be found in the personality or social background characteristics of individual deviants. Obviously deviance is "caused," but is it not a mistake to try to consider precipitating (or, the psychiatrist would say, predisposing) factors in individuals as operating outside of (or without relation to) the social definition of and reaction to such deviance?

Mr. Dienstfrey asserts that the argument of *Outsiders* is inapplicable to "more severe forms of waywardness," and cites juvenile delinquency and drug addiction as examples. Yet, as many students, including Paul Goodman, have stressed, dealing with individual "causes" can hardly be expected to solve or even to explain delinquency. Indeed, one can argue that much of what we label "delinquency" is simply working-class behavior proscribed by middle-class values. As to the more overtly anti-social delinquent acts, case histories are replete with evidence of earlier societal reactions which have defined the youth as "delinquent" and helped "cause" his more serious delicts. As I tried to suggest in an earlier piece in COMMENTARY ["Drug Addiction in America and England" September 1960], *whatever* precipitates the drug habit in individual instances, society's reaction to the condition of addiction, and specific public policies toward that condition, significantly shape addict behavior. . . . Mr. Dienstfrey may be correct in seeing Becker's analysis as best applying to the milder forms of deviance, but he greatly exaggerates its limitations. True, we would probably all agree that the cold-blooded killer is so "different" that society must consider him deviant, and that professional theft is not simply an "unusual" occupation. However, there are vast gray areas of possibly alternative reactions. . . .

As Mr. Dienstfrey properly notes, deviant behavior is often socially dangerous or personally destructive. Yet for each type of deviance we need to distinguish between "primary" elements (those universally inhering in the basic deviant act or pattern) and "secondary deviation" (to use Edwin Lemert's term)—whose elements are largely attributable to the way a particular society reacts to and deals with such behavior. Though sometimes a deviant individual may be "objectively unlike almost anyone else" (as Mr. Dienstfrey puts it), frequently it is in the deviance-defining conformist that we can locate a large measure of the responsibility for (and the explanation of) whatever torment or alienation the deviant may feel and even anti-social acts he may commit.

EDWIN M. SCHUR
Berkeley, California

MR. DIENSTFREY *writes:*

Mr. Schur is right to call attention to the fuzziness of my closing remarks about Howard Becker's *Outsiders*. I lost the sense of what I wanted to say amid two examples that inadvertently fit Becker's general argument as neatly as the two examples he himself used (smoking marijuana and playing jazz). But the troubling aspects of *Outsiders* remain.

The book argues that deviancy is the name some men give to the behavior of others, and that a man becomes a deviant through his social experience, exactly as he might become anything else—a conformist, say. As Mr. Schur's letter correctly indicates, this argument makes very good sense about the social processes that lead men to behave as they do, and its perspective is common to an important group of contemporary sociologists. The problem with *Outsiders* lies in the fact that Becker does not confront the cluster of complexities that surround its thesis. If the decision as to what is deviant is often the result of "who is in power," does this mean that society never has legitimate reasons for stigmatizing certain behavior? Because deviants and conformists are "produced" in the same way, does this mean they are entirely interchangeable? I am troubled that Becker does not ask these questions, which speak to the most serious implications of his argument, and leaves *Outsiders* in a blurring mist of relativism because they are not faced.

Race & Class

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Reading Leslie A. Fiedler's article "Race—The Dream and the Nightmare" [October 1963], I found myself reacting as I did to James Baldwin's celebrated *New Yorker* piece. Interesting as are Mr. Fiedler's thoughts on the problems of race relations, they reveal that prejudice—harbored chiefly by intellectuals—which pervades so much of the social criticism going on in this country . . . a prejudice against the whole of middle-class America, the class nurtured on the Puritan Ethic, reared in the belief that if one practiced the Ten Commandments, saved money, provided for one's children and one's future, one would . . . attain the ideal—a good and happy life. This bias lacks the dramatic qualities of prejudice against the Negro, . . . the Jew, . . . or the Indian . . . but it is just as real.

What the intellectuals rarely seem to take into account is that

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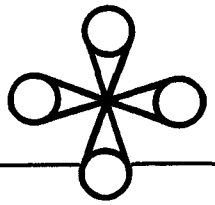

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the middle-class generation to whom they address their remarks has already awakened to the vast disillusionment that strict adherence to this code is no longer an automatic guarantee to that life. And the awakening entails a recognition that those who depended on the old codes were not only wrong, but also guilty, responsible for all the ills in our society from the dream and nightmare of race to the plight of the Ugly American. The trauma of this realization is perhaps as deep as that incurred by Mr. Baldwin on realizing he was black—and different. One need only observe the prevalence of alcoholism, the divorce rate, the complete confusion of direction in the thinking of the middle class for evidence of this disintegration.

Since the middle class itself has come to recognize the breakdown of the Puritan Ethic as an integrating factor, . . . isn't it about time that Mr. Fiedler and other intellectuals stopped harping on the issue? . . . Historically, liberal critics have led the way in meaningful revolution; perhaps more positive and constructive writing on the part of today's social critics could assist the middle class in finding new directions.

JEAN PEARCE
Palo Alto, California

Why Johnny Conforms

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mrs. Tung Orans commits her first and basic error [October 1963] when she calls the Think-and-Do Books "a series of workbooks designed to teach children how to read." They do not purport to do any such thing. They are to be used by teachers as one of many tools with which children may be encouraged to want to read, to reinforce previous lessons, or to stimulate oral discussions. . . . Her claim that the books encourage one-answer-only responses is also inaccurate. If a child can explain his answers, or justify his response, it is considered correct. But if he cannot follow directions or gives merely answers at random, the answer is considered incorrect, and the teacher knows that the child is either confused . . . [or] of limited ability, extremely negative in his responses, or has some other problem.

Again, Mrs. Orans . . . accuses the books of "training rather than stimulating a child's mind, emotions, memory," etc. She finds they give the teacher the power of "instilling" in the pupils the fundamental proposition that there are emotions which are correct and others which are not. In a classroom of thirty or more six-year-old children, it is not emotion which is the problem, but certain manifestations of it—such as a feeling of hostility which makes one child hit another. The hostility is there; a teacher must help the child discharge it constructively. . . .

Mrs. Orans concludes . . . that the authors of the Think-and-Do Books are "striving to mold a model man," who is an absolute conformist and conventional in every possible way. I would be most interested in what she would consider appropriate alternatives. Perhaps Dick should murder Sally and bring father (who is dressed in high heels) the bloody murder weapon? . . .

The children in my class think that Sally is a funny little kid . . . and their attitude of affectionate tolerance for a baby combined with their own feeling that they are now past such childish misconceptions seems to afford them pleasure in which there is a minimum of sadism and cruelty. . . . They feel that mother . . . loves her family and therefore has household tasks to perform for their comfort and safety . . . that father is the one who does the hard chores after work, but does not mind occasionally helping around the house. These roles are not forced upon the children, they seem to be the ones they accept. . . .

It is so easy to be flippant and amusing when evaluating materials for young children, but I failed to find even one constructive suggestion by the reviewer as to how she would improve these books. . . . Perhaps before authors rush into print on this subject they should check their ideas with some skilled teachers. . . .

(MRS.) SIBYL ADLEN
Los Angeles, California

MRS. ORANS *writes:*

To Mrs. Adlen's first charge: *mea culpa.* I should not have presumed so simple and direct a purpose for the highly complex and sophisticated Think-and-Do Books. Mrs. Adlen is quite correct: they do not teach children how to read. Instead their purpose is to provide teachers with a tool to use to encourage children to want to read, as well as to reinforce previous lessons which reinforce other previous lessons, which reinforce previouser lessons. . . .

That is very much related to my complaint, which is simply that these books teach everything but what they should teach. Readers and accompanying workbooks should teach children how to read rather than lay down doctrine on whether dimes have a taste, whether a late model car is prettier than an early one, whether a certain task is properly mother's or father's, whether certain jokes are funny.

It is interesting that Mrs. Adlen sees fratricide and homosexuality as the twin alternatives to conformity; I don't know how much truth there is in it, but it is a commonly held view. She is mistaken, however, if she thinks that I object to the Think-and-Do model man merely because I have a better alternative. To be sure, there are better alternatives, but I would object to any single, consistent, didactic model to be followed by five million children.

Yiddish Dailies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . The *Jewish Daily Forward* is fortunate that it does not employ Isaac Bashevis Singer for reportage, for he has neither the name of our paper correct (*The Day-Jewish Journal*) nor the circulation statistics of his own ["An Interview with Isaac Bashevis Singer," Nov. '63]. The circulation Singer attributes to the *Forward* of 80,000 to 100,000—if he means paid readers—has not been near that in years. . . . As far as actual readers—conservatively there are well over 200,000 readers about equally divided between the two papers. Paid readers total approximately half, about equally divided. *The Day-Jewish Journal* has somewhat more in New York City and the *Forward* picks up the difference on the West Coast because it predates its Western Edition.

. . . Mr. Singer states, among other things: "many of my readers like my journalism better than my stories, and some of my best stories were never published in the *Forward.*" I am pleased to say that the writers on our staff give the best that is in them. They have a love and respect for each other, which is more than Singer shows. In discussing the Yiddish press, Mr. Singer could have named some of

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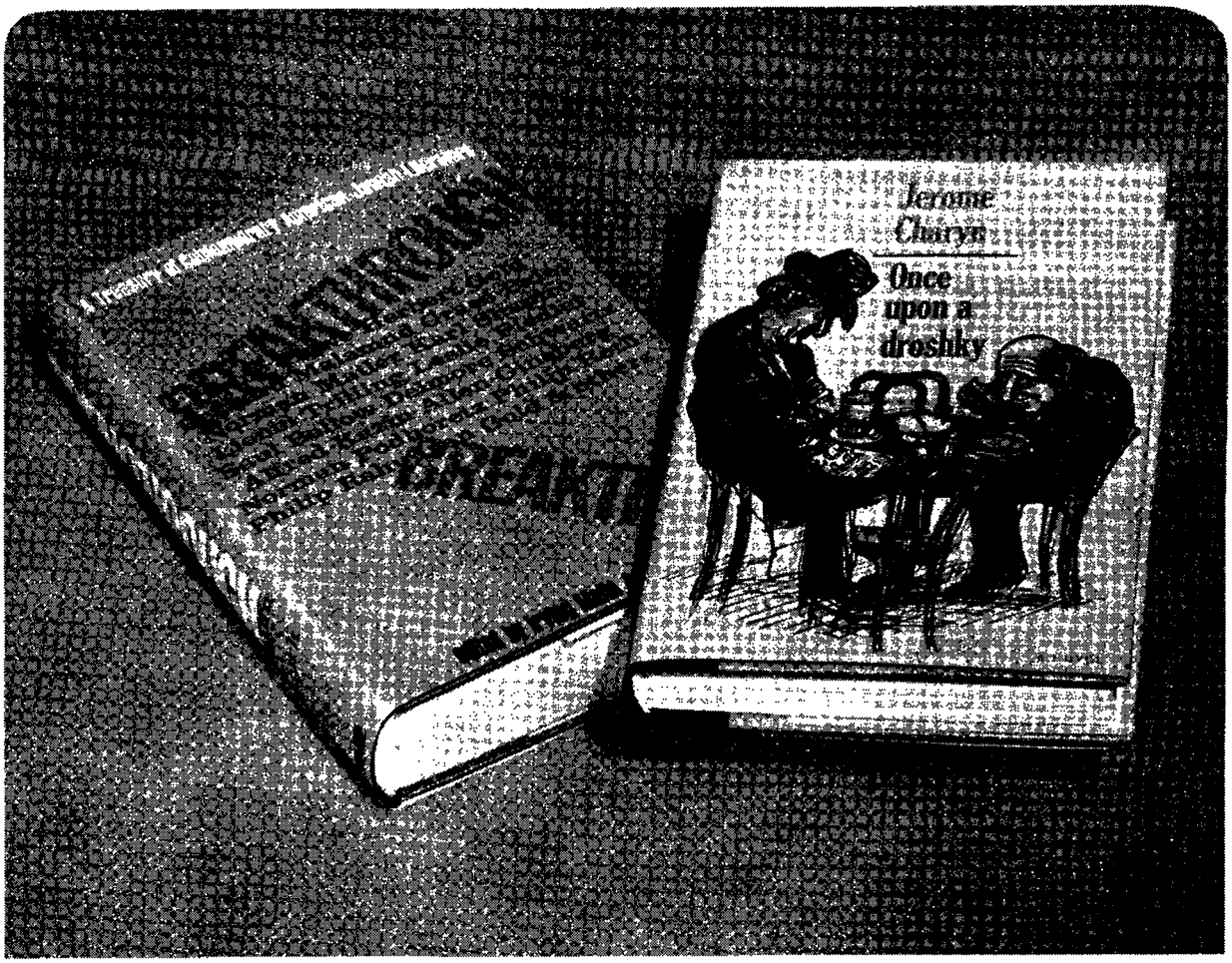

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his eminent colleagues on both papers.

The Day-Jewish Journal . . . gives Jewish news in depth which is indispensable to the leaders of our communities and congregations throughout the country. It has been described as a daily trade journal for the Jewish world.

Really, Mr. Singer should stick to his mysticism and not go into other fields.

ARTHUR L. JACOBS
General Manager
The Day-Jewish Journal
New York City

MR. SINGER *writes:*

The Audit Bureau of Circulation, which is not an organ of mysticism, published the following statistics lately: for the *Jewish Daily Forward*—daily circulation, 53,974, Sunday, 57,438; for *The Day-Jewish Journal*—daily, 43,072, Sunday, 49,934, Saturday, 36,167.

I am sure that the number of actual readers is larger for both newspapers.

U.S. Foreign Policy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article "The Impotence of American Power" [November '63] Hans J. Morgenthau does his usual splendid job of pointing out how foolishly we are behaving. He blames much of the weakness of our foreign policy . . . on blind adherence to two "moral principles": equality and non-intervention . . . [which] has caused us to go astray in South Vietnam, Pakistan, Spain, and Western Europe. He concludes that "our judgment must be reformed." We must . . . jettison our moral rigidity and be practical. All this is fine in theory, but no one has any real expectation that American policy will move in this direction. Yet, why should these reforms . . . seem so unlikely? . . . Is it simply because we are too moral to be clear-headed and too dogmatically equalitarian to be leaders? Is this why we have supported such men as Chiang, Diem, Rhee, Batista, and company? I think not. The real problems of American foreign policy lie well beneath the surface Professor Morgenthau describes. . . .

The problem of non-intervention should not be the central point raised by a critic of American foreign policy. Attempts by the U.S. to intervene have hardly been lacking in the last fifteen

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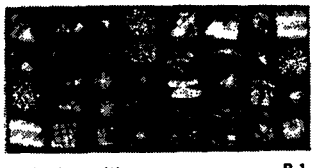

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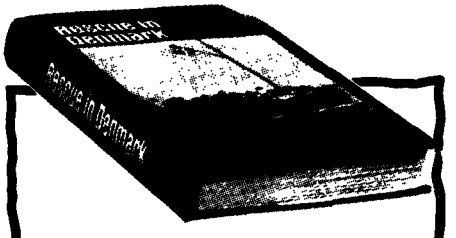

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years, as Cuba, Guatemala, Iran, and China illustrate. The real issue should be the kind of intervening the U.S. has done and will do: why will we intervene at certain times and refrain at others? In the case of Vietnam, defenders of the Diem regime did not invoke non-intervention but rather the fear of Communist victory or of being soft on the Reds. Pressures on the administration to pacify rabid anti-Communist "allies" are great, and our policies toward Spain, Vietnam, Chiang, etc., have been conditioned not by fear of intervention but rather by domestic political considerations.

It is these domestic pressures that Professor Morgenthau neglects. Even an administration devoted to sensible politics—along the lines perhaps that Professor Morgenthau suggests—would face the prospect of political suicide in carrying them out. Thus, even the most clear-headed and morally undogmatic may feel they have very little room to maneuver, given domestic American political realities.

Professor Morgenthau criticizes our "commitment to anti-Communism as the overriding objective of our foreign policy," but he fails to go any further. It is precisely at this point that an analysis of our foreign policy must begin. Why this overriding commitment? How has such an objective become an American institution? What social and psychological function is it serving for different groups and individuals? It is not enough for an analyst to ask us to reform our judgment—for, as the young Marx argued: "The demand to renounce illusions about one's situation is a demand to renounce a situation that required illusions." What we need to know, and what Professor Morgenthau is probably well equipped to tell us, is what our "situation" is and how we can reshape it.

LEWIS LIPSITZ
University of Connecticut
Storrs, Connecticut.

New Left Reviewed

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I'm tempted by Jonathan Miller's attack on the English New Left—which dominates his dismissal of Bernard Kops's admittedly distasteful autobiography, *The World Is a Wedding* [Nov. '63]—to examine Miller's qualifications for the hasty social and political anal-

"while the art of printing is left to us . . . what is once acquired of real knowledge can never be lost." THOMAS JEFFERSON

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ysis his review offers. Certainly, the disappearance with barely a quiver of the spasm of English "satire" Miller once heralded in a now embarrassing article in the *Observer* indicates the correctly Establishment nature of the entertainment Miller and his Cambridge mates provide; no one aware of the radical perception which motors genuine, savage satire (Lenny Bruce, for example) can fail to understand the success of the arch and fey variety that Miller and his crew have imported to Broadway. (Imagine Lenny Bruce playing for months at the Golden.) But the uncoordinated, chaotic, ofttimes pretentious and unsophisticated movement styled the English "New Left" deserves more than dismissal.

I'm admittedly biased; from 1960 to 1962 I served as assistant to the editor of *New Left Review*. I think I understand something of the shallowness and the romanticism which colored our attitudes, and which angers Miller. But what he does not understand is that the *rapprochement* on the English Left, after Hungary and Suez, brought together an older generation of activists who had repudiated Stalinism but not socialism with a much younger generation, almost apolitical, which felt its protest directed toward the ossified institutions, decayed cultural forms, and general flabbiness in emotion, thought, and style which characterized the English middle class. *The New Reasoner* and *Universities and Left Review*, Victory for Socialism and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, made chaotic partnerships; on individual levels, arguments about Mayakovsky disturbed folk singers—the resulting styles of the movement were certainly uncoordinated, many times pretentious and silly, sometimes bizarre. But it is dangerous to dismiss a movement because of its excessive or discontinuous style; one must examine what the New Left *meant*, to English politics, English theater, English cinema, English fiction, English cultural criticism. Few intelligent radicals dismiss the Negro protest movement because evangelical, emotionally unsophisticated Negro churches are an integral part of it. I can only suggest that CND's contribution to a transformed English political context is enormous; that the English stage, since Osborne, Wesker, Arden, Anderson, Gaskill, Dexter, and even Tony Richardson have appeared, has been basically (though not completely) transformed; that the film directors who pioneered the Free Cinema movement (Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, Tony Richardson) have dominated the "new" English cinema. The contemporary critical examination of primary and secondary education, television, public housing, and England's snarled transport system are all conducted out of a "New Left" ambience, and a quick check of *New Left Review*'s contributors reduces Miller's ready labels ("anti-intellectual left-wing populism," "a revolt against modernism," "political pre-Raphaelitism") to sour, cheap phrase-making. May I protest, in the strongest terms, at the dubious practice of using a review to smear a movement, and urge COMMENTARY to offer analysis of what *occurs* on the English Left?

NORMAN FRUCHTER
New York City

MR. MILLER *writes*:

Mr. Fruchter is tempted to examine my qualifications as a social analyst. I wish he had yielded to the temptation at hand instead of getting drawn off into an irrelevant diatribe against my theatrical success. I am tempted myself to examine Mr. Fruchter's credentials for making such an analysis, but I shall stick to the point and try to answer the central part of his criticism.

It is always possible, by tearing phrases out of context, to make a review look spiteful and shallow. What I wrote was not intended as a dismissal of the New Left in England, nor was the review of Bernard Kops's book intended as just a convenient vehicle for such an assault. The work as it stands seems to me to represent, in a rather vivid form, some of the looser and more anti-intellectual aspects of contemporary left-wing thought. The fact that Mr. Fruchter himself was honest enough to recognize these failings for himself does not mean that the matter is thereby closed to any further comment, nor does my position as an Oxbridge graduate put me in any jeopardy as a critic by contrast with the supposedly privileged status of an ex-editor of the *New Left Review*. With his glib remarks about "Cambridge mates" and "correctly Establishment nature," Mr. Fruchter himself falls into the unpleasant role of "sour, cheap phrase-maker" with an extra dollop of paranoia for good measure.

My aim, in this review, was to point out that there existed on the Left similar styles of thought to those found on the far Right—a sentimental rejection of modern complexity, a regression to oversimplified primitivism, and an undue dependence on conspiratorial theories of politics. Since I was not, in this particular piece, trying to review the Left as a whole, I did not consider it necessary to balance my criticism with an account of those areas with which I am in entire agreement. Mr. Kops's book illustrates the sentimental abuses of socialism, and since this was the work under consideration, any other matters would have been irrelevant.

So much for the shrill tone of Mr. Fruchter's letter. Now for some of his more specific "points."

He claims that CND made large contributions to the transformation of the English stage and screen. Mr. Fruchter only reveals a touching ignorance in making a claim like this. The unquestionable change in the English performing arts was wrought by social upheavals which lie widely scattered, a long way upstream of the nuclear controversy. Subsequent alliances formed between the new writers and the CND are certainly a feature of the present scene, but no one in his right mind can claim that the CND produced the cultural transformation. In fact, where CND feelings have impinged on their work, these artists have generally fallen below their usual high quality and broken the back of their own best work with interludes of pamphleteering brashness. To say this, of course, is not to dismiss the CND, with which I am anyway in a large measure of agreement. I simply wish to protest at a display of sloppy, and I suspect, rather uninformed social and political analysis. The origins of the current transformation in the English theater and cinema are not to be found in the annals of the CND but in the history of such apparently unrelated institutions as the Royal Court Theatre, Stratford East, the provincial Reps, and even in the (dare I say it?) in the postwar setups of the Oxford and Cambridge dramatic clubs. A close look at the work of the shrewdly commercial Woodfall film company would also pay handsome dividends here. A consideration of these blending streams would make a valuable contribution to the cultural history of England since the war, and I suggest that Mr. Fruch-

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ter repair his own sociological credentials by paying some attention to this insead of embarrassing himself by shows of angry ignorance.

Be Fruitful & Multiply

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb's "The Vanishing Jews" [September '63], indicates that American Jewry is not doing as well as we would like to believe. I think this is due to certain trends in American Jewish life, primarily the fact that our families have grown too small. There are too many only children . . . who grow up without a sense of belonging anywhere. They are sometimes attracted to Christianity, where the larger families give an impression of solidarity and strength. . . . We have become too middle-class. Despite what the Israeli pioneers have wrought with their bare hands, many Jews still look upon physical labor as a shameful way to earn one's livelihood. . . . It is considered better to be a fourth-rate professional, frustrated and with feelings of inferiority, than to be a laborer with the satisfaction of doing a necessary job well—an attitude which makes American Jewish life unattractive for such frustrated minor professionals. . . .

JOSEPH LOVITZ

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If America's Jewish population is stagnating or actually declining, a revised rabbinical attitude toward intermarriage and conversion will hardly effect an overnight solution. The statistical picture could, however, be reversed if the average young Jewish couple decided to have just one more baby. That they are not doing so is the crux of the problem; and the villain is the mighty dollar. . . .

A generation or two removed from the Lower East Side and its larger families, the college-educated young Jewish professional of today is climbing the American social ladder and has very ambitious hopes and plans for his children. He knows what the keys to the establishment are, and intends to hand them to his kids. The decision to have another child is not lightly taken, and the discussion is more appropriate to the banker's office than it is to the bedroom. . . .

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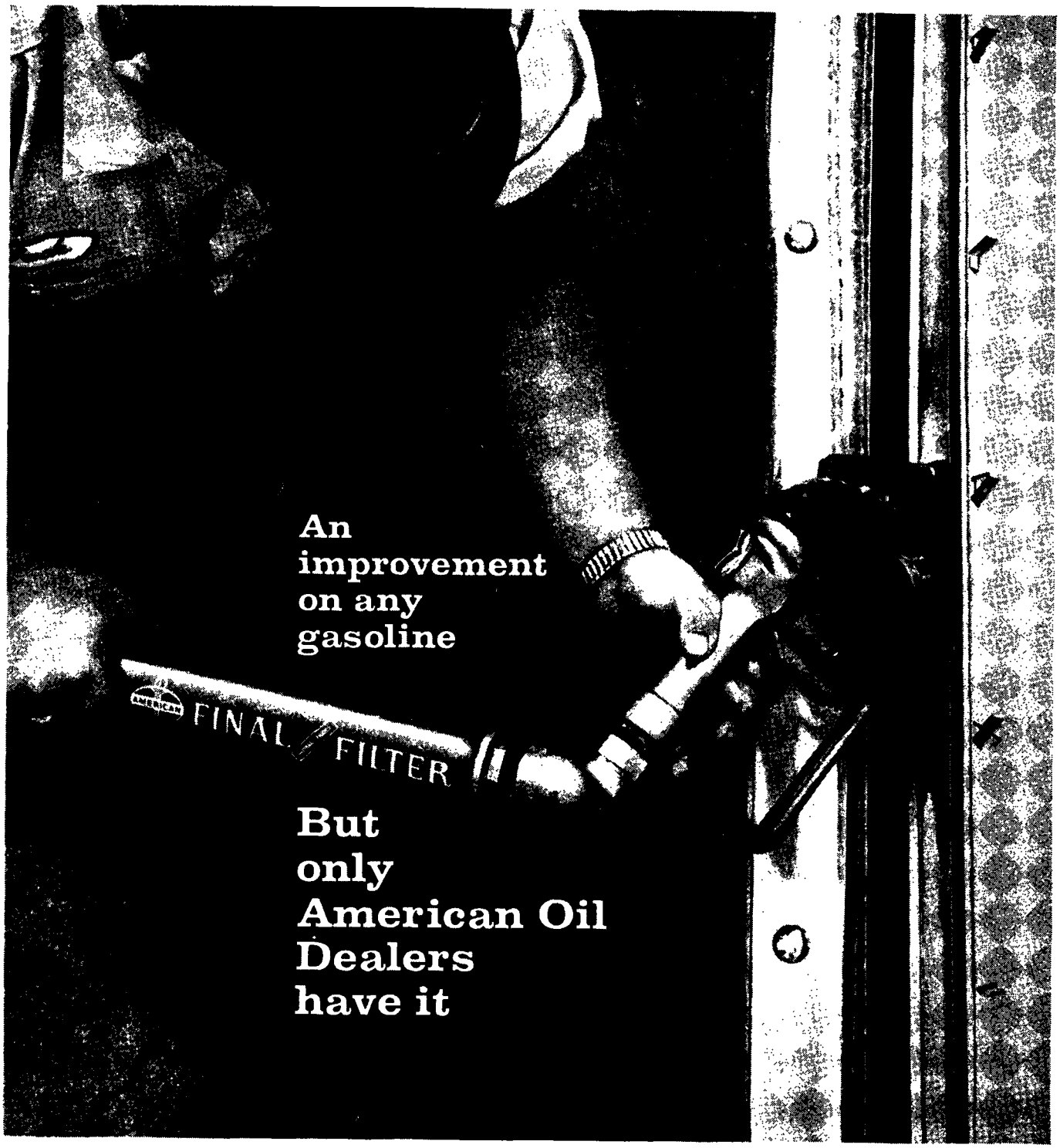

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LIBERALISM AND THE NEGRO

A Round-Table Discussion

JAMES BALDWIN
NATHAN GLAZER
SIDNEY HOOK
GUNNAR MYRDAL

This is the third round-table discussion COMMENTARY *has held in recent years on vital questions of the day. Like the first ("Western Values and Total War," October 1961) and the second ("America and the World Revolution," October 1963), the present discussion was wholly spontaneous, lasted for three hours, and took place before an invited audience which was given an opportunity to participate during the last hour. What follows is an edited transcript of the entire proceedings.*

JAMES BALDWIN, *whose most recent books,* Another Country *and* The Fire Next Time, *have both attracted world-wide attention, is also the author of two essay collections,* Notes of a Native Son, *and* Nobody Knows My Name, *and the novels* Go Tell It on the Mountain *and* Giovanni's Room. *Much of Mr. Baldwin's earliest work was originally published in* COMMENTARY.

NATHAN GLAZER, *who is now professor of sociology at the University of California (Berkeley), is co-author (with Daniel P. Moynihan) of* Beyond the Melting Pot *and was also one of the authors (with David Riesman and Reuel Denney) of* The Lonely Crowd. *His other books include* American Judaism *and* The Social Basis of American Communism. *Before taking up his post at Berkeley, he spent a year working with Robert Weaver at the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency in Washington.*

SIDNEY HOOK, *chairman of the department of philosophy at N.Y.U., is the author of such works as* The Quest for Being, From Hegel to Marx, *and most recently,* The Paradoxes of Freedom. *Mr. Hook was one of the participants in our 1961 symposium on "Western Values and Total War."*

GUNNAR MYRDAL, *director of the Institute for International Economic Studies in Stockholm, is the author of what is widely regarded as the classic study of race relations in America,* An American Dilemma. *He has also been a member of the Swedish Senate and has held cabinet posts in the Swedish government. His most recent book is* Challenge to Affluence.

NORMAN PODHORETZ, *the moderator, is editor of* COMMENTARY.

Norman Podhoretz: I think it may be fair to say that American liberals are by now divided into two schools of thought on what is often called the Negro problem—though it probably would be better to use the term that Professor Myrdal used as the title of his famous book, and to speak not of a Negro problem but of an American dilemma. On the one side, we have those liberals whose ultimate perspective on race relations (as David Danzig puts it*) envisages the gradual absorption of deserving Negroes one by one into white society. At its most extreme, this position has sometimes looked forward to an eventual merging of the two races, though of course that possibility has rarely been discussed in public among liberals—and for very good reason, as I am here to testify. Over the past two or three years, however, a new school of liberal (or perhaps it should be called radical) thought has been developing which is based on the premise—to quote Danzig again—that "the rights and privileges of an individual rest upon the status attained by the group to which he belongs." From this premise certain points follow that are apparently proving repugnant to the traditional liberal mentality (if one can judge by New York *Times* editorials and the statements of presumably liberal politicians like Governor Rockefeller and the late President Kennedy). For the traditional lib-

* "The Meaning of Negro Strategy," COMMENTARY, February 1964.

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eral mentality conceives of society as being made up not of competing economic classes and ethnic groups, but rather of competing *individuals* who confront a neutral body of law and a neutral institutional complex. At any rate, the newer school of liberal thought on race relations maintains that the Negro community *as a whole* has been crippled by three hundred years of slavery and persecution and that the simple removal of legal and other barriers to the advancement of individual Negroes can therefore only result in what is derisively called "tokenism." This school of thought insists that radical measures are now needed to overcome the Negro's inherited disabilities. Whitney Young of the National Urban League, for example, has recently spoken of a domestic Marshall Plan, a crash program which he says need last only ten years, in order to bring the Negro community up to a point where it can *begin* to compete on equal terms with the white world. Other Negro leaders have similarly talked about 10 per cent quotas in hiring, housing, and so on. Negroes, they say, ought to be represented in all areas of American life according to their proportion in the population, and where they are not so represented, one is entitled to draw an inference of discrimination. The slogan "preferential treatment for Negroes" is the most controversial one that has so far come up in this discussion. To get some notion of how controversial this particular idea is, we need only remind ourselves of how roughly Stanley Lowell, chairman of the Mayor's Human Rights Commission in New York, was attacked when he recently advocated the adoption of such a policy.

There is, then, a conflict within the liberal community on the question of race relations; that much seems obvious. And the conflict is exacerbated by certain economic considerations that Professor Myrdal, in particular, speaks of in his new book, *Challenge to Affluence*. Given our sluggish rate of economic growth, can enough jobs be created to satisfy the demands and aspirations of the Negro community even if formal discrimination is eliminated altogether? In other words, it may be that the problem of unemployment is the crucial one, and not the problem of segregation. But that's something I hope we'll get into later. What we want to take up first is the question of whether the conflict I have been trying to describe will lead—as some people deeply fear that it will, or indeed already has—to a widening split between the Negro movement and the white liberal community, and whether and how this split might be adjudicated, both in principle and in practice. Mr. Hook, while you may not be an expert on race relations, you are most certainly an expert on the principles of liberalism, and so I think I'll ask you to start.

Sidney Hook: Well, let me begin by referring to an experience I had thirty years ago, when I was on the executive committee of the American Workers Party, which was certainly dedicated to the proposition that society consists of competing economic groups. We had sent our organizers to the South, and one night, at a meeting of our executive committee, the organizer from Texas appeared. He had succeeded in organizing councils of unemployed workers among the whites and Negroes, and the question then developed as to how and under what circumstances to arrange the first meeting. It turned out that the white members had refused to come to a meeting unless the seating were segregated, and our organizer was now reporting back to us for instructions. Now, all of us were liberals, all of us were socialists—indeed left-wing socialists—and we were faced with a dilemma, because if we insisted upon banning segregated seating at that meeting, there would be no organization and no possibility of getting the reforms we were working for. Well, the decision was made to have the first meeting, at least, segregated—in the hope that when these unemployed workers got together, they would, in recognition of their common interests and common struggle, abandon segregated seating in the future. It didn't work out that way because there was no future: the opposition to any kind of council of the unemployed, segregated or desegregated, was too strong. I cite this story to illustrate the fact that a conflict of principles can arise whether you take the traditional, liberal-individualistic point of view or the social group-conflict point of view.

To me, the case against discrimination rests fundamentally on ethical premises. The justification of formal rules of equality lies in the hope that such rules will further both the economic and the ethical equality of human beings—and I define this ethical equality as an equality of concern on the part of the community for each individual within it to develop his capacities to their greatest reach, for each individual to become a fully developed person. From this perspective, I do not see any conflict with the traditional principles of liberalism, as I understand them, in the idea of a *temporary* crash program to improve the position of the Negro community.

Let us imagine that an earthquake or some other disaster has taken place in a neighboring city followed by an influx of the population from that region to ours. I think it would be perfectly compatible with our commitment to democracy to make special provision for the people involved—individuals who had been disadvantaged, who had suffered more than members of our own community—so long as the provision were temporary. There might be some relative injustice to some other individuals in our community who were also in need, but any moral order of priority would have to recognize the greater need. We have done comparable things in the past. In the 30's, there was an influx of refugees from Ger-

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many to the United States. Very often these immigrants were given vocational opportunities that others in the community may have been just as qualified to fill. But no one thought it was unjust to provide special opportunities for them, because their need was more urgent, sometimes desperate.

The other day I read that James Farmer had proposed a program to the President involving vast measures of remedial educational enrichment for deprived children. Now to be sure, those who would profit most by a program of this kind would be Negro children. It isn't because they are *Negro* children that we ought to support this program; it's because they are deprived children. They have been disadvantaged more than other children, their need is greater, and therefore they are morally entitled to special treatment. This is how we can achieve the level of ethical equality I was talking about a minute ago. I draw the line only where I think a respect for the personality of Negroes requires that it be drawn. It is well known that in some institutions like the Bronx High School of Science, and in certain other special schools for the gifted, the number of Negro students in relation to the school population is small. Some of my friends have argued that in order to establish a proper balance, in order to provide equal educational opportunity for the Negro student, he should be given a special status in those schools—which means that standards should be lowered or waived altogether; otherwise, the argument runs, it would take too long for the imbalance to right itself. This seems to me to be objectionable on many grounds. I consider a program which would lower the standards of *achievement* for Negroes as tantamount to regarding them as second-class citizens. We have a moral responsibility to provide the educational opportunities that Negroes need to achieve the full measure of their own potential. But to say to the Negro in a spirit of patronizing friendliness, "Well, if you can't make the grade we set for the whites, we'll lower it for you," is an expression—perhaps an unconscious expression—of the kind of chauvinistic attitude which in the past all genuine liberals have deplored. Negroes have just as much right, for example, to be treated by adequately trained physicians as whites. Under present conditions, unfortunately, this depends upon there being many more Negro physicians in practice. And although it may take time for a sufficient number of Negro physicians to be trained—unhappily there are not many more today than there were twenty or thirty years ago—the measures required to counteract that situation do not entail a lowering of professional and intellectual standards. What is needed is a program to create greater educational opportunities for those now deprived, and to mobilize the nation's resources at the most strategic points toward that end.

Podhoretz: Mr. Baldwin, you've had some unkind words to say about liberals, if I remember rightly. Do you still want to say them? How does the situation look to you—especially in terms of what Mr. Hook has just said?

James Baldwin: I don't want to sound—as I'm told so often I do sound—bitter or disaffected, but I do think that there's a very real problem in talking, as Mr. Hook was just doing, about ethical considerations in a society which is essentially *not* ethical. I might be perfectly willing to be one of the first Negroes to be accepted either here or there; I might even be perfectly willing to wait ten years or a generation to be fitted into American civilization, or American society, if I really felt that one *could* be fitted into it as it now is, as it's now constituted. But to my mind, you see, before one can really talk about the Negro problem in this country, one has got to talk about the white people's problem. The German refugees that Mr. Hook mentioned and all the other immigrants who have come to these shores and who have gotten or not gotten preferential treatment were nevertheless looked on by the bulk of the American community as white people, and they never served—at least not in the memory of any man living—the same function that American Negroes have served. I don't think we can discuss this properly unless we begin at the beginning. And the beginning is that Negroes were a source of cheap labor and everything white people did thereafter in relation to Negroes was a way of justifying this. I think it can be said, and I think that most liberals would finally have to agree, that the presence of the Negro here is precisely what has allowed white people to say they were free; and it is what has allowed them to assume they were rich. There is a sense in which one can say that the history of this country was built on my back. I don't mean that other people didn't pay for it too, but I do mean that the economy would be very different today if I hadn't built the railroads for nothing, if I hadn't picked the cotton for nothing—if, in fact, my role weren't to keep on doing all that, in effect, for nothing. After all, part of the reason there is a battle going on in the Deep South (to leave it only there for the moment) is that as the Negro starts voting and becomes economically free, the power of the Southern oligarchy will obviously be broken and the South is apt to become a very different place. And if the South becomes a different place, so will the rest of the nation.

Now, to get back to preferential treatment and ethics and morality: from a certain point of view, it doesn't matter whether you send Negro kids to the Bronx High School of Science or to any other school, indeed; and it doesn't matter what you teach them about ethics and morality there. Because those kids don't live in school, they go home. I went to DeWitt Clinton High in New York; I wasn't a bad student; and I got along

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very well with my playmates and all that jazz. Nevertheless, when the school day was over, I went back into a condition which they could not imagine; and I knew, no matter what anybody said, that the future I faced was not the future they faced. So inevitably, as graduation time approached, what had looked like a friendship broke up and we went our different ways—because the forces of our society drove us in different ways. Clearly, in terms of the American mythology and in terms of any realistic assessment of my future, I was going to be a porter, and they were not.

What I am trying to say is that you can't hope to invest a child with a morality in school which is going to be destroyed in the streets of Harlem—and every Negro in America lives in one or another version of Harlem. Until we can deal with the question of *why* Negroes are kept in ghettos and *why* white men move out when Negroes move in; until we can deal with the question of *why* precisely in a free country we allow the South to dictate to the federal government; until we face our responsibilities as citizens of this country quite apart from the Negro problem, I don't see that we can begin to talk about the Negro problem with any hope of clarity.

Podhoretz: Mr. Glazer, as a sociologist who has studied what is called in the trade the acculturation of immigrant groups, do you agree with Mr. Baldwin that this whole problem begins with cheap labor?

Nathan Glazer: I'll get to that point eventually, I suppose, but I'd rather talk about liberalism first, because I see a number of very serious problems in connection with that word. Liberalism assumes the existence of certain mechanisms for the solution of problems: it assumes reasonableness; it assumes also a kind of good will; it assumes an acceptance of the principle of the fundamental equality of all men. But none of these assumptions applies in the South. Let me read you a newspaper clipping I've brought with me: "A group of housewives in Jackson, Mississippi charged in a bitter hearing today that their children are being subjected to brainwashing by textbooks that teach them that prejudice is wrong. The women also contended that the school books introduce pleas for world government, and try to further a belief in the brotherhood of all people."

Now this seems to me a real challenge to the American Creed—to use a term that Dr. Myrdal made famous—and it raises a question similar to the one that the appearance of Nazism in Germany raised for liberalism in the 1920's, or for that matter that the Southern defense of slavery raised for this country in the 1850's. What does liberalism do or say in the face of what seems to be a mass commitment to evil, or at least to a point of view that doesn't enforce on those who hold it an obligation to work toward any improvement?

Having mentioned the worst problem, I would now like to speak about the big cities of the North, which seem to be the major context for our discussion here. Unfortunately what happens in the big cities of the North is colored by the fact that they're part of the same country as Mississippi and Alabama. Maybe it would have been better if we hadn't fought the Civil War at all, and could now take the same attitude to the South as we do to South Africa—because I do think that the Southern kind of position just can't be found in the North. Regardless of their behavior, people in the North won't even admit to polltakers that they are prejudiced—or anyway very prejudiced. Now even if this is hypocrisy, a case of the homage that vice pays to virtue, it's still true that the American Creed does prevail in the North. Bills can be passed; whites and Negroes can confer together on what ought to be done about discrimination; you can get a Fair Employment Practices Law; you can get a Fair Housing Law. Of course, many Northern Negroes see all this as not only illusory but as some sort of farce. The assumption seems to be that the people who run the Fair Employment Practices Law aren't doing their job or that the law itself is irrelevant. So Negroes in New York, for instance, insist on jobs by demonstrating in the streets and chaining themselves to cranes, while the political authorities run around trying to do something about it. But I'm convinced that the Fair Employment Practices Law isn't a farce. In New York they have a big budget; they check personnel procedures and application forms (in the big organizations anyway); they act pretty quickly on complaints. And they get results—Negroes *do* get jobs. But the results aren't good enough—at least not good enough to make the Negroes feel that the political order is responsive to their real situation and their needs.

Then take the case of housing. It's not a matter of "tokenism," nor can you talk about an exclusive power structure, when a Negro, Robert Weaver, heads the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency in Washington, or when a Negro runs or is second in command of a local housing commission (he's usually one or the other), and when 30 per cent of his staff is Negro. Despite what the *Amsterdam News* says about those Negroes—that they've sold out, that they're Uncle Toms, or what have you—if not for an accident of fate, they might today have been on the staff of the *Amsterdam News* writing editorials themselves. Anyhow, I know something personally about the housing situation since I worked for Mr. Weaver for a year in the Housing and Home Finance Agency. There's no question that probably four-fifths of the Negroes in New York City (and other cities as well) live under awful conditions; a small number, of course, live in nice

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houses in Queens, and a much larger number (about one-sixth or one-seventh) in public housing projects. Now, it's hard enough to deal with the demand for "Freedom Now" in general, but how do you even deal with the demand for Freedom Now from rats, from vermin, from crowding, from garbage? How do you provide good housing conditions *now*? People with perfectly good credentials, both racial and libertarian, have been struggling with such matters for a long time, and they have to contend with conflicts of interest—this, I suppose, brings us back to Mr. Baldwin's point about the power structure and the economy—that no one seems able to overcome. It isn't Mr. Weaver's fault or the fault of any other administrator. There are some cities, for example, which could build far more public housing than they are currently doing. Why don't they? Well, one of the reasons is that this housing would be available to Negroes, and the white people of those cities don't want Negroes living near them. But that's only the beginning. There is also the question of money. We don't have adequate funds for public housing. Two per cent of all housing in this country is public housing as against something like 30 per cent in England and similar percentages in other countries. Americans don't like public housing, and one of the reasons they don't like it is that they put all sorts of restrictions into the law to make sure that it will be awful. Nobody ever quite says this, but the idea is that while the poor may be entitled to safe, decent, and sanitary housing, they aren't entitled to live as well as *we* do.

The Northern problem, then, is not a problem of laws or of formal equality. Negroes in the North vote, they go to school, they get jobs, there aren't any repressive or discriminatory statutes on the books. But formal equality simply hasn't worked to produce actual equality, or rather it has been working too slowly. It's ridiculous that there should be only one Negro principal out of six hundred or eight hundred in New York City. The *Amsterdam News*, looking at such a figure, says that the Board of Examiners discriminates. I myself feel sure that the Board of Examiners doesn't discriminate—not in the way the *Amsterdam News* means. They have tests which for a lot of reasons Negroes find hard to pass: the school system, like everything else, is a bureaucracy, and Negroes haven't yet been able to penetrate it.

Now let me come back to an important point that James Baldwin brought up. The formal equality that prevails in this country has always been accompanied by a great order of inequality that doesn't apply only to Negroes, though Negroes are its worst victims. Traditionally, there have been ways of dealing with this problem, and these ways have worked well enough to prevent ethnic and race wars from breaking out. One of them has been the provision of formal equality itself: formally we take no cognizance of differences among groups. Informally, however, cognizance has always been taken of these differences. We set up "balanced" tickets, we make sure that different groups are represented on boards, commissions, and so on. Of course, all this comes about as a result of pressure from these groups—pressure that elicits an intelligent or a civilized response from someone in power. Sometimes the man in power, like the mayor of Detroit, is clever enough to give a job to a member of the pressure group before he is asked for it, or before the pressure group even thinks of asking for it. In my opinion, this is a reasonable procedure. American democracy has always been a hazardous thing. The official idea—call it hypocritical if you will—is that we are all alike and can live together in harmony. But everyone knows that we are all different and want to live apart—which we do. The Jews live apart, not only because they are often socially excluded, but also because they themselves want to maintain their separateness. The same is true of the Catholics: they want a certain amount of contact with other groups, but not that much, and they do many things to insure their separateness, including the maintenance of a very expensive parochial school system. This, then, is the American group pattern. The problem for Negroes is not that they are outside the pattern, but that they have been very badly off within it. And this too poses a challenge—a challenge of another sort—to liberalism.

Podhoretz: Mr. Myrdal, to what extent do these matters we're discussing seem to you a problem of laws—some that can be made, and others that can be removed? I know that you have some ideas as to what is likely to happen so far as the legal situation is concerned in the next ten years.

Gunnar Myrdal: Let me start a little further back with the ideological framework that you sketched in before, because I don't feel myself at home at all within that framework, and most American liberals I know, Negro and white, don't fit into it either. You tell me that there are now two schools of thought. The first believes that if the Negroes are given their rights, they can move up one by one, and eventually you will have an integrated society. Then there is another school which says that society is made up of groups and not of individuals, and that it is the whole group which must be moved up. I don't see those two positions as the real alternatives. Certainly as a liberal, I believe that all laws and rules that discriminate against Negroes must be done away with, and I personally am optimistic enough to believe that within the next ten years all such laws and rules will in fact disappear. But we should not be so stupid as to think that this by itself will solve the problem. It won't. Prejudice will continue to exist even if the legal and institutional basis for it is removed. And not only that, but since the Negroes are poor—and since they

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have a higher proportion of illiteracy, of school dropouts, and the rest of it—other things besides the removal of prejudice are needed to lift the group. To that extent, I agree with the second school of liberal thought that Mr. Podhoretz was talking about—except that I don't understand why they should speak of the *Negro* group. I don't think Negroes are going to be given preferential treatment and I think it would be most unfortunate if they were—though Professor Hook is probably right in saying that there are individual cases in which preferential treatment might work. But on the whole, what is needed, of course, is to lift *all* the poor people at the bottom, the people I call the "underclass" or the submerged group, out of poverty and everything that poverty implies. And this means—as Mr. Baldwin said—remaking American society. I think it would be most unfortunate to try to get a kind of Marshall Plan specifically for the Negro. There are several reasons. Politically, I doubt that it would be possible to push such a plan through—if only because white people today simply do not have a bad conscience over the fact that Negroes were brought here into slavery a long time ago. My ancestors were the Vikings, who were of course a murderous crowd—murdering, raping, and enslaving people. And yet you'll find the average Swede or Norwegian almost proud when he talks about the Vikings. The point is that ancestral guilt doesn't work, and it certainly won't work in America where the underclass includes so many other groups—the Puerto Ricans, the Mexicans, and the poor whites in all the big slums in the big cities and the small slums in the small cities and the rural slums in the country. Improving the lot of this whole submerged group has become a very acute problem for America, and it is only in that larger setting that the Negroes will be able to achieve anything more than formal equality. Furthermore, looking just at the practical side of the whole matter, anyone with any sense knows that it's not possible to solve the Negro housing problem as a *Negro* housing problem. For one thing, you could never get the money; and even if you could get the money, I doubt that it could technically be done. I think the same is true of education: you'll have to get rid of all your bad schools and improve the *whole* educational system.

Of course at the moment the Negroes are the only active part of the submerged group. The others—the Mexicans, the Puerto Ricans—are just quiet. The Negro rebellion—it seems to me very interesting that this should have happened—is an exception to the general rule that America has the least revolutionary proletariat in the world. But when the situation of a rising group is aggravated by unemployment, you inevitably get a revolutionary situation; and now you've got one in America. This doesn't mean, however, that something preferential ought to be done for the Negro group alone. For the last six years I've been working very hard on development problems in Southeast Asia, and I've seen something of how a policy of preferential treatment works out in practice. There is India, for example, where, as you know, the Untouchables constitute a much larger group than the Negroes do in America. The Untouchables for some time now have been given preference in employment, in education, in voting, and in many other areas. But when you look at all this closely, you find that it really amounts to nothing more than tokenism, because it affects only a very tiny minority of the Untouchables. And in addition, it also contributes to stabilizing the situation of caste in India, just as, I am sure, preferential treatment for Negroes would tend to make firmer and more lasting the differences among groups in America. And there I am liberal in Mr. Podhoretz's first sense—both in believing that all formal discriminatory rules and laws must be eradicated and in looking forward to a society which is color blind. I've seen places in America —a few university campuses, for instance—where people already move around together and don't notice who is Negro and who is white.

Hook: May I ask you a question at this point, Dr. Myrdal? It seems to me that a dedication to the long-range goal of remaking all of society is not responsive to the *specific* problems which exist here and now. Let's take your illustration of India, for example. In India not only are special considerations given to the Harijans, but there is, I believe, an *unofficial* policy that 10 per cent of all civil service posts be set aside for Moslems until such time as the number of Moslems in the civil service shall be proportionate to the number of Moslems in the population as a whole. This plan has a time limit built into it. It was designed to meet a specific situation, and was an indication of the willingness of the Indian government to make provision for the special, disadvantaged situation of the Moslem, and particularly to assure the Moslem that he was not outside the national community. I do not think such a policy—which has probably lessened the danger of subversion and civil war in India—is incompatible with liberalism.

Myrdal: Well, you give the argument for this kind of thing, but you know, Gandhi was always against it. Furthermore, it's dangerous, because it can lead to a situation where people who are less qualified are preferred to people with better qualifications.

Hook: It depends upon how *critical* the situation is—and, of course, I am assuming roughly equal qualifications. But these are not the only measures to be adopted. I agree that it is essential to move toward the improvement of the economic situation. As a socialist, I take it for granted that we are trying to move in that direction. But eco-

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nomic improvement alone does not eradicate discrimination.

Here I want to go back to the fundamental question that Mr. Baldwin raised about whether we are an ethical society. Of course, no society has historically been organized on the basis of ethical principles, but I don't think we can understand how any society functions without observing the operation of the ethical principles within it. And if we examine the development of American society, we certainly can say that we have made *some* progress—not enough progress, to be sure, but progress nevertheless—by virtue of the extension of our ethical principles to institutional life. If we want to explain the progress that has been made in the last twenty years by minority groups in this country—not only the Negroes, but other groups as well—I believe we have to take into account the effect of our commitment to democracy, imperfect though it may be. After all, one of the justifications for having laws against discrimination on the books is that after a while people begin to regard the law as the determining norm in their lives. I can't see how we're going to achieve what Professor Myrdal has in mind if we don't assume that the direction we should be moving in is ethical as well as economic.

Baldwin: I must say that I don't myself necessarily take it for granted in this context that one is always moving in an ethical direction.

Hook: One should.

Baldwin: Well, I'm not sure that one can. I'd like to. But what strikes me here is that you are an American talking about American society, and I am an American talking about American society—both of us very concerned with it—and yet your version of American society is really very difficult for me to recognize. My experience in it has simply not been yours. God knows I have no desire to say that we have made *no* progress, though I have certain attitudes of my own about it. For example, as far as I can tell, the progress that has been made in the last twenty years has not been mainly due to the application of ethical principles but to the fact that the country has been extremely prosperous (without further examining what that prosperity really means). When the economic level of the country as a whole rose, obviously the Negro level rose more or less proportionately with it. And this created, among other things, those kids in the streets who were raised in relative security and therefore had a different attitude toward the world than we did who were raised in the Depression. Besides, by the time these kids were sixteen or seventeen, the black people of America were no longer at the mercy of the American vision of black people, because there were now other black people in the world who escaped the definitions which American Negroes had always been taught and more or less forced to live with. Now that is, if you like, progress. But looking at it as a black American citizen, looking back at the entire record and speaking not as a sociologist but as a writer, I don't see that there's been any real change in American attitudes. I'm delighted to know there've been many fewer lynchings in the year 1963 than there were in the year 1933, but I also have to bear in mind—I have to bear it in mind because my life depends on it—that there are a great many ways to lynch a man. The impulse in American society, as far as I can tell from my experience in it, has essentially been to ignore me when it could, and then when it couldn't, to intimidate me; and when that failed, to make concessions. The way white Americans look on each other is not the way they look on the black population here. You simply can't get around that fact.

Hook: Mr. Baldwin, we have lived, of course, in different worlds, but perhaps not so far apart. I grew up in a Brooklyn slum before the First World War, and I was just thinking of the difference between Mr. Podhoretz's experience as he described it in his COMMENTARY article last year,* and my own. I went to a school where the hero was a Negro teacher, a man by the name of Jim Harris. He was a hero primarily because he could kick a football over the school building. But he was also *my* hero because he was the man who gave me, so to speak, my educational start. At the same time there were race riots going on in Brooklyn, not reported in the press. On the basis of your experience, Mr. Baldwin, you say that the attitudes of the American people to the Negro haven't changed. But on the basis of my experience, I say that the attitudes of large sections of the American people *have* changed. Things that were practiced when I was young would be regarded as intolerable today. In Coney Island, for instance, there was a horrible game: I mention it only as a symbol of many other things. For a nickel you got three hard balls that you could throw at a Negro who served as the target. I remember being consoled by my father who told me that it really wasn't a Negro who was the target but a white man dressed in black face—as if that made any difference. Today, of course, such a thing would be regarded as an outrage. The whole moral tone has improved, and part of the new attitude toward the Negro is a reflection of the burgeoning consciousness of more and more whites that the democratic legacy was betrayed in the past by the way Negroes were treated. These whites haven't got a sense of collective guilt, but they do have a greater sense of responsibility than most people had when I was young. And this, it seems to me, is of the first importance to recognize. A kind of rev-

* "My Negro Problem—And Ours," February 1963.

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olution of rising expectations has taken place—expectations as to what decent conduct should be—and it flows, I think, primarily from education. That's why I would continue to put the main emphasis on education.

Podhoretz: Mr. Baldwin, this seems to me a crucial point. Did you literally mean to deny a minute ago that there have been important changes in white attitudes toward Negroes in the last twenty years?

Baldwin: Well, I have to repeat that, yes. But could I come back to it in a moment after I talk about two other things? One is the concept of rising expectations. I think that concept applies to immigrant groups, and we've talked a great deal about immigrant groups here—that is, people who came to this country voluntarily and who managed, once they got here, to achieve a way of life and a whole attitude toward reality and toward themselves which they could not have achieved if they had remained wherever they came from in Europe. In that sense it is perfectly true that the idea of rising expectations is part of the American experience: you leave the famine-ridden farm in Ireland, you come to America, you fit into the American scene, you rise, you become part of a new social structure. But that is only the European immigrants' experience. It is not the Black experience. I did not one day decide to leave my farm and come to America. I was brought here. I did not want to come. And when I got here, I did not, like the Irish and the Jews and the Russians and the Poles and the Czechs and the Italians, immediately find myself in a slum and then by hard work and saving my pennies rise out of the slum into a position of relative economic security so that my idea of reality changed. That is not the black experience in this country, and there is no point in pretending to ourselves on any level whatever that it *is*. The black experience is entirely different. You find yourself in a slum and you realize at a certain point that no amount of labor, no amount of hard work, no amount of soap is going to get you out of that slum.

Which brings me to the second thing I want to talk about—education. Any Negro born in this country who accepts American education at face value turns into a madman—*has* to. Because the standards that the country pretends to live by are not for him, and he knows that by the time he starts pledging allegiance to the flag. If I had believed, if any Negro on my block had really believed what the American Republic said about itself, he would have ended up in Bellevue. And those who did believe it *did* end up in Bellevue. If you are a Negro, you understand that somehow you have to operate outside the system and beat these people at their own game—which means that your real education essentially occurs outside of books. You cannot believe, as Americans apparently do believe, that George Washington chopped down that cherry tree and said "I cannot tell a lie." You know better. And so what you have to do is educate yourself. I think it might be useful to turn the proposition we've been discussing around for a minute, and instead of talking about giving Negroes preferential treatment, talk about giving *white* people preferential treatment for the purpose of enabling them to learn their own history. Because what you discover as a Negro child in school—and certainly later—is that you are not in the history books. It doesn't demand a vast amount of perception to discover *why* you are not in the history books. And then you realize that if *you* are not in the history books, a great many other things must be left out of the history books too, including everybody else in the country.

Glazer: But that's not the point. Sure—everybody else has been left out too, and they know it.

Baldwin: I'm not sure they know it.

Glazer: Of course they know it.

Hook: They know it because they read about it in the books.

Glazer: No, they know it the same way Negroes do—because they've been left out of the books. The Jews aren't in the history books, the Italians aren't there, the Japanese aren't there, the Czechs aren't there. In fact, the immigrants are only there to explain how the cities became corrupt. So this is a society in which we all learn to live on two levels—the level on which we say that there's equality in America, that we all have the same chance to get ahead, that we're all going to get our rightful share; and that other level on which we know perfectly well that somebody always has an advantage, that some groups are more privileged than others, and that some people have better connections than others. I don't think the first level is a complete phony. Since the assassination of President Kennedy, a lot of the Irish in Washington have been very sad for more than the obvious reason. They know that many of them will be leaving, even though it may take a year or so. But why were there so many in the first place? Was it a plot? A conspiracy of the power structure? Of course not—these were the people the late President was comfortable with. This is American society—the part that never gets written about and that everybody knows about. Politicians certainly know about it, and they act on it when they make up tickets and appeal for votes.

Let's look at it this way: on the one hand, this country does too much through laws, much too much, and one of the problems is that you can't get rid of them when you need to, because they all represent complex compromises. But on the other

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hand, very important things are done in America without any legal authority. Now there, I think, the Negro revolution has reminded people of the failures of sense and of awareness which they have been guilty of. It's ridiculous that New York doesn't have thirty Negro school principals by now. But I'm convinced that the reason has more to do with blindness than with prejudice as such. In general no one paid enough attention to the fact that the lower class was becoming mostly Negro in the cities. Now they're paying attention.

Hook: Do you think there's been progress in the last twenty years?

Glazer: Oh, that's a complicated story. Yes, in a way. If you look at income figures, Mr. Baldwin, you have to conclude that a lot of Negroes must have believed "that stuff" and not gone crazy. Twenty per cent of the Negroes in New York have white-collar jobs; that figure must mean something. As far as white attitudes are concerned—yes, there's been progress in the sense that there's been a decline in violent attitudes and violent feelings. What they've been replaced by is another question. The ethical quality of American life is least evident among people talking to each other in places like bars and private homes. But it does come into effect wherever the groups have to get together—where the politicians get together, where heads of school systems get together, and so on. Then they remember the American Creed. But the whole thing is very perilous. Look at the public-opinion polls. Down below hardly anybody wants equality or is in favor of civil liberties, and they want to take the vote away from the Communists. But up above they remember the American Creed. And the system works because there's enough power at the top to keep it going. Is that progress? I don't know. But I think that's the way things work in America.

Podhoretz: Mr. Myrdal, you had a comment to make on this question of the ethical element in American life, didn't you?

Myrdal: Well, what I believe is that this country succeeds in living a very sinful life without being deeply cynical. That is the difference between Europe and America, and it signifies that ethics *means* something here. And it is because ethics means something here that I feel certain there are going to be changes in the law within the next ten years. It's true, as Mr. Glazer says, that the ethical element operates particularly within institutions, and the higher the institution the more perfectly it operates. A local labor union may stand for discrimination, but the national association won't; it will be more liberal because it represents a greater investment of American ideals. On the other hand, of course, your ethical American will very happily ignore many things around him which are bad, and he is particularly ready to follow his ethical principles to their logical conclusion when it doesn't cost too much. The civil rights things don't cost very much. But improving the real situation of Negroes and poor people generally *would* cost money. Now, as an economist, I think I can prove that in the *end* it wouldn't cost money, because it would mean the utilization of wasted resources, and the utilization of wasted resources has to make a society richer. Still, there is all this superstition about the budget in this country, and getting around it really presents a messy problem.

As to white attitudes toward Negroes, yes, I do believe that there have been changes. But you know, no upper class ever gave up its monopoly or its privileges out of ethical principles; the submerged group needs power to force its way in, and it is this that makes the ethical principles prevail. In a place like Bloomington, Indiana, they have slums that are exactly like Harlem, but the people living in them aren't Negroes, they're "Kentuckians," old-American stock who have migrated from the Appalachian region. They live in shacks, they have a high crime rate, there's a lot of prostitution and gambling, they get only occasional work. But nobody cares. Many people in Bloomington probably aren't even aware that such slums exist in their town. And there, of course, the Negro rebellion helps—it helps to make people conscious of the extent to which poverty is still a problem, and it helps activate the better part of the American heart.

So power is important, but attitudes and ethical principles count also. And where the Negroes are concerned, they count enormously, because the Negroes don't have enough power. I had a visit the other day in Stockholm from a Negro sociologist, a professor from California, who said that he didn't believe at all in my idea that the better part of the American heart was on his side. "But brother," I said to him, "you are only one-tenth of the American people, a poor tenth, and you are powerless; if the whites wanted to, they could dump you all in the ocean or they could buy up some old plantation land somewhere in Mississippi and pen you up in it. They can do whatever they like with you." "No, no," he said, "what about the Supreme Court?" "Well," I answered, "if the whites, who are 90 per cent of the population, wanted to change the Constitution, they could dump the Supreme Court in the ocean too." So what the Negroes have to rely upon in the end is that America *is* its institutions, and that the highest of these institutions will act when they come under pressure. And when they act, they will act according to certain principles, which, like Professor Hook, I call ethical.

Podhoretz: Mr. Baldwin, what do those institutions look like to you, as a Negro? First, do you have any real faith in them to operate against the

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resistances, and particularly the second-line resistances, that have been developing in the North? And second, how seriously do you want us to take your statement that there have been no attitude changes? What about that 20 per cent Mr. Glazer was referring to who are not in Bellevue, but who are assimilated, acculturated, embourgeoised, or whatever nasty word you want to use?

Baldwin: Mr. Glazer doesn't go to cocktail parties with them. I know about that 20 per cent; my point about progress would be the same even if the figure were higher. No matter how well they may get along in the office with their fellow workers, they are not white, and they still lead different lives from white people, and in the main they don't tell the truth to white people. Mr. Hook talks about ethics, but when he says ethics, I read attitudes. And I know about the attitudes that Americans have toward justice, freedom, and equality, and I understand that no self-respecting white American on a certain level is about to say what he feels about Negroes—and indeed, I'm sure he doesn't feel much about Negroes, I'm sure that by now he knows that my body odor is no worse than anyone else's. But the gap between your institutions (assuming now that they're ethical) and the people in the streets is what has created the danger in which we stand now and the urgency of our situation. You and I around this table and everyone in this room may agree that our institutions are really working to liberate the Negroes. But the *Negroes* don't believe it. And given their history, given their experience and their actual situation, they have no reason to believe it. They would have to be willing to be betrayed one more time by the people on the top who say, "Wait, and we'll take care of you tomorrow," and tomorrow means the 20 per cent Mr. Glazer is talking about, while the other 80 per cent are still in jail.

Who created this pressure on the institutions, after all? It was the people in the streets, disaffected and despairing, who forced whatever changes have taken place within the last six years; it was the people who got their heads broken and were put on chain gangs. Six years in and out of jail is not easy. If America were really a more ethical society, this price would not have been demanded. And it's certainly not through being paid yet.

Podhoretz: May I reformulate the question for everybody around the table? I think it's unfortunate that the word ethics came into the discussion.

Hook: That's a very peculiar observation.

Podhoretz: Maybe so, but I think it ought to be possible to discuss the question without reference to how good or how bad anybody's intentions are, and therefore I'd like to reformulate it in the following manner. Have we by now arrived at a point where it is beginning to be conceivable that the Negroes as a people, as a community, will take their place within the next five or ten or fifteen or twenty years as one of the competing groups in the American pluralistic pattern? By a pluralistic pattern, I mean precisely one which is made up of *groups,* each competing for a share of the pie and each getting about as much of the pie as its political, economic, and intellectual power can get for it. Until pressure was brought by those people on the streets, it was not, in my opinion, conceivable that such a thing would happen. Now I believe that it is conceivable. Do any of you agree?

Hook: I think it all depends on what we ourselves do. To take the position (which seems to me almost implicit in Mr. Baldwin's words) that it's hopeless, that the more things change the more they remain the same, may have a tendency to paralyze our ethical impulses. Our real problem—and this is how I interpret ethics—is to work on all the specific projects by which we can bring our Negro fellow citizens into the "kingdom of democratic ends."

Podhoretz: What about the kingdom of jobs?

Hook: I'll come to that. But in answer to Mr. Baldwin and to set the record straight, I want to point out that the Supreme Court desegregation decision of 1954 was handed down before there was any pressure from the streets. Of course the Supreme Court has played a very unhappy role, from Dred Scott to the nullification of the Civil Rights Act of 1875; if that act had been upheld in 1883, discrimination could have been abolished a long time ago. But let's not dwell too much on the past. The 1954 decision was a tremendous reversal, and it did not come about as a consequence of pressure from the streets. Nor were the actions of two American Presidents in sending soldiers to enforce the rights of individual Negroes—something which, when I was young, would have been hard to imagine—the consequence of mass pressure from the streets.

Now to return to the specific instance of jobs. One of the problems we encounter here is trade-union opposition to jobs for Negroes. Many of us fought for labor in the past, and now we discover that some of our friends in the labor movement are opposed to sharing jobs with Negroes. Well, what is one to do? Does one deplore it and let it go at that? Certainly not. It seems to me one should press for legislation which would deny the use of federal services to any trade union that discriminated against Negroes. There are very few unions that could survive a law of this sort. Applying the same pragmatic approach to every other point, it should be possible to do some creative thinking instead of throwing in the sponge when-

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ever we encounter a particular problem which is very stubborn. Sometimes we have to go slowly. It's a mistake, for instance, to try to integrate the schools by bussing white children from long distances into Harlem; this does neither the schools nor the children any good, and it creates unnecessary obstacles to other measures which favor the common goal. In answer to your question, then, Mr. Podhoretz, as to what the next ten or twenty years have in store for us, I should say it depends entirely upon our own intelligence and our own courage.

Podhoretz: Mr. Baldwin, is it conceivable to you that the Negroes will within the next five or ten or twenty years take their rightful place as one of the competing groups in the American pluralistic pattern? Or is something more radical —or perhaps less radical—more likely to happen the way things are going now?

Baldwin: In the first place—I want to say this particularly to Mr. Hook—I don't feel at all hopeless. One can't afford to. But I'm afraid I have to keep coming back to the same thing. Because the whole structure interlocks. In itself it's a very interesting fact, though a sinister one, that trade unions should object to Negroes being in them and working side by side with white workers. But that's not the only problem. The problem is that the economy cannot provide enough jobs for everybody—I mean white people now—and so when the Negroes come along and ask for jobs, we get, as we have now gotten, into a very dangerous situation which could precipitate chaos. If this is so—and we all know it is—then we have to take a very hard look at the economy and do whatever has to be done to revise it. Or take legislation: even if we got from the federal government a law prohibiting trade unions from discriminating against Negroes—and any such law is a long way off—it would still have to be enforced, and that has to be done by the people, really. How much time can a man spend in court to get a job or a house? Now since the law is so far off, and since there is no guarantee that we'll get it or that it will be enforced if we do get it, Negro men chain themselves to cranes and lie down on airports to dramatize the situation and, if necessary, to immobilize the country. At bottom—and I'm very serious about this—it is not a Negro problem. It is not what is happening to the Negro that is so terrible. It is what is happening to the whole country that is so terrible. That's why when you ask about the Negroes in the next five or ten or fifteen years taking their place as a competing group and getting their share of the pie, I can't answer directly. I can't put it that way to myself. What pie are you talking about? From my own point of view, my personal point of view, there is much in that American pie that isn't worth eating.

Podhoretz: O.K., that's you, but what about your fellow Negroes? Wouldn't they be perfectly happy to eat everything in that pie? You said in *The Fire Next Time* that Negroes wonder whether they want to be integrated into a burning house, and at that point—as someone observed —you were speaking as an American social critic rather than as a Negro. Now the question is, is it the Negroes who feel that the house is burning and that the pie is rotten, or is it only James Baldwin?

Baldwin: I think this: terrible things have happened to white people as a result of our history and terrible things have happened to Negroes. One of the things that has happened to Negroes is that they themselves have acquired such habits of inferiority and have evolved such a way of life —which, whatever else one says about it, is more vivid than the bulk of white American lives—that they have become in some sense accustomed to their oppression. I don't mean that they accept it or that they like it, but they *know* it. *They know it*. They do not call the cops as other American citizens do; they don't have the same expectations.

Glazer: Yes, they do call the cops.

Baldwin: Not at all. They don't.

Glazer: They call the cops. One of the biggest demands in Negro slums around the country is for more police protection and better police protection. Maybe they don't like the police, but they want them. Look at the newspapers, talk to the people. They certainly demand the cops.

Baldwin: No, but let's be clear about this. It depends on who you are talking about now. Who wants them?

Glazer: A lot of Negroes do.

Podhoretz: The cops are part of the pie. I think we can agree on that, so we get back to the same question.

Baldwin: Before we get back, I want to say one thing. At least in Harlem and on the South Side of Chicago, the two Negro communities that I more or less know, the complaint about the cops is that they don't protect the property, they don't protect the lives. One can be robbed in Harlem three times a week and nothing will ever happen. Now if they're asking for cops, they're not asking for what you think they're asking for. They're asking for police protection. It is not the same thing.

Hook: I'd like to pursue the question that Mr. Podhoretz asked as to whether James Baldwin is speaking for himself or for most Negroes. If I

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read his most recent book properly, he actually believes that all Negroes hate white people; at least that's how some people have interpreted him. But that's not true for the Negroes I know, and it can't be true for Negroes who have married whites. . . .

Podhoretz: It depends on your theory of marriage.

Hook: There's Dickens's idea that since all things wear off in time, it's best to begin marriage with a little aversion. Anyhow, I think some of us have a tendency to drug ourselves with rhetoric when we speak of attitudes. There are people who say you either have to love Negroes or kill them. I don't love *all* white people. Why should I love *all* Negroes? I think we drug ourselves with rhetoric when we advocate wholesale solutions like total intermarriage to make color disappear. It seems to me this is an insult to the Negro population.

Podhoretz: Are you referring to my article on the Negro problem?

Hook: Well, the proposal you made there is a variation of an old one. Bruno Bauer in the 19th century said that the best way for Jews to get their civil rights was to stop being Jews. But the conception of democracy—which, as I keep repeating, is fundamentally an ethical conception—is that we can live peacefully together with our *differences*. It's enough to have friendship and respect for one another without necessarily loving one another; and of these, respect is more important than friendship because friendship is personal, while respect is the basis on which all the moral and political obligations we have to one another as human beings rests. I want to say again, I find a good deal of the discussion concerning the Negro problem these days very rhetorical and unnecessarily inflammatory; much of it puts obstacles in the way of progress. I saw a television program the other night called "Confrontation." I was horrified to discover that the only feeling many white people had toward the Negroes who are moving into their communities was one of resentment; they had no notion whatever of their own elementary human responsibilities. We as educators have failed to make an impact upon communities of this sort. But were they to become familiar with the doctrine that all Negroes hate whites and to believe it, they would have some justification for their attitude. I think, then, that we owe a responsibility to the problem, to ourselves, and to our fellow citizens to speak bravely, eloquently, but without exaggeration.

Podhoretz: If I'm not mistaken, Mr. Baldwin and I have both just been charged with irresponsibility. I'm the moderator and not a participant, so I'll resist the temptation to answer, but I think Mr. Baldwin ought to have a chance.

Baldwin: Let me say one more time, I don't hate white people. I haven't got the time, I haven't got the energy, I have other things to do. And as far as I know, Mr. Hook, I never said that all Negroes hate white people either. What I *have* said is that I cannot imagine any Negro in this country who has not for at least one of the twenty-four hours of a day hated all white people just because they were on his back. That is not the same thing as saying all Negroes by definition hate whites. Negroes do have every reason, let's face it, to be extremely bitter and distrustful toward white people, and that is part of the burden of what I am trying to say.

But I don't know why we don't face the question of power here. For example, the real victims in the Deep South are the white Southerners. Those people, ignorant and pathetic and miserable as they are, are at the mercy of the Southern oligarchy. It is one of the most cunning bargains ever struck in history. Men like Senator Eastland —in fact, that whole lot in Washington—batten on those people and keep them in their prison. Now we could, of course, take mobile units down there and educate them, but we also have to get rid of the people in power in Washington whom they serve. In other words, there is a power structure that has to be examined.

Podhoretz: We have an economist and a sociologist with us here. Maybe they can examine it for us. Mr. Myrdal?

Myrdal: As an economist, I would rather talk about what I believe is the really fundamental thing—the rate of economic progress. Even if this is a group society, and the Negroes exert their power as a group, and because of the American ethos (which I think is important) all discriminatory rules are abolished—if you don't get your economy moving, you will be stuck no matter what laws you make. The primary condition for the progress and for the group actions we are talking about is to get the American economy moving. But I don't think you can get it moving—and here we have the connection between the race problem and poverty problem—until the whole submerged group is given more purchasing power and the education and training they need to compete more successfully on the market. America is not only a pluralistic society, it is also a society made up of individuals. And when you talk about individuals, the economic argument comes in. And I, for one, think that the economic argument is very important.

Glazer: I agree—the economic argument is absolutely essential. Being the sociologist here, though, I want to make two more points about

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power. It was said earlier a number of times that trade unions object to Negro workers getting in. But it isn't the trade unions who object, it's the workers. Not that they object to working side by side with Negroes; a white family may move away when a Negro family moves in, but no white worker (except maybe in the South) ever left his job because a Negro moved in. This is a great strength, and it means that you can do a lot with jobs that you can't do with housing. So it isn't a matter of workers insisting on *segregation;* it's that they are defending a monopoly. This is the point I want to raise about the whole power situation. To get the country moving—to develop the higher expenditures which would make for a higher rate of economic growth—involves measures all of which affect monopolies. For example, we don't, I assume, have enough skilled workers in this country. But the skilled workers don't think so; they think it's fine that plumbers make fifteen thousand a year, and they'll fight to the death against the notion that there should be twice as many plumbers—whether Negro, white, Jewish, Chinese, or anyone else—with salaries stopping at ten thousand. Or take the case of education. The experts insist that we need more money for education, much more money; I'm not so sure money is the problem in this area, but in any event, there's no way of getting it locally, so it has to come from the federal government. What stands in the way? Not so much the right wing as the difficulty of giving money to the public schools without giving it to the Catholic parochial schools. Health insurance is another example. You can look at the issue abstractly in terms of the Right versus the Left, but what really is happening is that a private and special interest—namely the AMA—is holding on to a certain kind of monopoly which it interprets to its own advantage. My point is that this country is very feudal, which is why the discussion in terms of ethics seems to me almost irrelevant to the way things actually happen. From this perspective the reconstruction of American society raises problems that look to me almost as apocalyptic as Mr. Baldwin's —the breaking of traditional monopolies which have played a very important role in American history.

Hook: How do you expect to motivate the attack on monopolies without appealing to the ethical consciousness of all groups in the population? How do you think the AMA will ever be forced to make these concessions? I mean, granted that you have to fight monopolies, with what instruments are you going to fight them?

Glazer: Ethical instruments, among all others. But I think the most valuable instruments are political—you have to find different interest groups which for various reasons form a coalition to effect a certain change.

Hook: How about the powerless? Suppose they haven't got power to fight power?

Glazer: That brings me to my very last point: the illusion of powerlessness. When I talk to someone who works on the highest levels in Washington and he says he doesn't have any power, I wonder who's crazy. But of course everybody has power; everybody has *some* power. The problem is putting it together and using it.

Podhoretz: On that singularly unapocalyptic note, I think we'll close the discussion around the table and open the floor to questions. Mr. Charles Silberman.*

Silberman: Mr. Baldwin, speaking not long ago, before a group of teachers at P.S. 180 in New York, you were asked what is the role of the white liberal in social change, and your answer was, "There is no role for the white liberal, he is our affliction." I wonder if you could amplify that.

Baldwin: I was talking about what I take to be a certain missionary complex on the part of white liberals, whose assumption basically seems to be that I am much worse off than they are and that they must help me into the light. Now, that's a perfectly honorable thing to feel, but historically it has been an affliction to Negroes. My own attitude toward the Bible, for instance, is still somewhat ambiguous because the people who brought it to me didn't themselves believe it. What I want to say here, though, is this: in general, the level of American experience—as I read it, as I have experienced it living here for all the years that I've been alive—seems to me much less dense, much less interesting, and finally in some way much below that of most Negroes that I have had to deal with. White Americans impress me as being far more hopeful, far more innocent, far more irresponsible, far less aware of the terrible, black, ugly facts of life than black people can afford to be. I don't mean this as a level of sensibility, I mean it as a matter of experience. I said at that meeting of schoolteachers that if you don't know what Ray Charles is singing about, then it is entirely possible that you can't help me. Because I have had to find out some things that white Americans do not know and that they must find out. I had to lose my virginity very early, and most white Americans still cling to it. It's on this basis that I called white liberals a kind of affliction—there is something impertinent in the assumptions they make about me. After all, I have watched the way most white people in this country live. I have worked in their kitchens and I have served them their brandy, and I know what goes on in white living rooms better than white

* Mr. Silberman is a member of the Board of Editors of *Fortune.*

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people know what goes on in mine. And what I repudiate is the idea that I should learn how to live that way. I can get through my morning without a psychiatrist—so far—and if I had to choose between the way most white Americans live and my spareribs and my watermelon, then I would take my spareribs and my watermelon. Of course, it's a choice I refuse to make.

Hook: I'm a white liberal. It seems to me Mr. Baldwin is here confusing white people and white liberals. The white liberals I know do not ask him to share any particular kind of culture. The white liberals I know are fighting for his right as a human being to make his choice as to what kind of culture he wants to live in. The white liberals I know do not define democracy as an equality of sameness, of identity, but as an equality of difference. And that's why I criticize the sentimentalists who say that everybody either has to be like the whites, or that everybody has to be like the Negroes. I want to have as much difference as possible, but difference on the basis of political and social and ethical equality. This is what I mean by saying that Mr. Baldwin, who is one of the most eloquent voices of our time, sometimes speaks in a way which makes a common struggle for common values difficult. He speaks of responsibilities which we white liberals recognize. But what about the Negro's responsibility? What about the responsibility of the Negro intellectual? If he develops a myth of collective guilt, as Mr. Baldwin has done in his recent writings, then he's doing a disservice to the whole cause of liberalism. Our minds have already been too poisoned by the doctrine of collective guilt, and the Negroes themselves have often suffered because of it. The white liberals I know do not feel responsible for actions which they couldn't control. There's a difference between collective guilt for the past and collective responsibility in the present, for such responsibility can ultimately be brought home to each individual's door.

Silberman: Mr. Baldwin, since you said that there is no role for the liberal, could I ask you how this radical reconstruction of American society that you insist is necessary, can take place? Are the white conservatives going to do it?

Baldwin: I have a very definite idea in my mind when I talk about a white liberal. These may not be the liberals you know, Mr. Hook, but they are the liberals I know. They are the people who nowadays, for example, say to me: "Jimmy, what are you crying about? You've *made* it." Now it seems to me that such a statement reveals a terrible set of assumptions. I happen not to have a Cadillac, but the liberal assumption is that I want one. The liberal assumption is that once you arrive at a certain level of social and economic status in American life, there's nothing left to worry about. What I mean by a liberal is someone who accepts these mechanistic terms and someone, furthermore, whose real attitudes are revealed when the chips are down—someone who thinks you're pushing too hard when you rock the boat, who thinks you are bitter when you are vehement, who has a set of attitudes so deep that they're almost unconscious and which blind him to the fact that in talking to a black man, he is talking to another man like himself. What I am calling for, asking for, hoping for, is that when I walk into a room, people will not immediately assume that I want to talk about civil rights. Maybe I don't want to talk about civil rights. The man who assumes that I always do doesn't mean me any harm, he's not my enemy, he's not a wicked man at all. He just has a certain set of reflexes which control him. He doesn't know what this does to the Negro he's talking to, who is aware that he is not being talked to as he would be talked to if he were white, simply.

As for collective guilt, I'm not anxious to make people feel guilty, I don't think there's any point to that. But I do think—and perhaps I should preface this by saying that I am a writer, that I can't lie about what I see—I do think that one of the things that has been absolutely crucial to American history can almost be summed up in the metaphor of a black corpse or a black presence or a black horde which everyone in one way or another agreed not to look at. One sees in the South, for example, an effort on the part of an entire population to deny what they know they have done. One is not interested in accusing any given person of any given crime. That is not the point. The point is that these crimes are committed, and have been committed for generations now, in the name of white Americans. So you can't now say, "My neighbor can be lynched and he's also innocent," and still say that you're not responsible. Do you see what I mean?

Hook: Yes, but I don't agree. A man is responsible for the things that he can control, for the things that he can avoid doing. Those people in the South today who turn their eyes away from the Negro problem are responsible for the situation to the extent that they can relieve it. But they are not responsible for the initial acts which developed the situation in which they find themselves. People in some communities in the North who have never come into contact with Negroes find it incomprehensible to be charged with guilt. They can be charged with responsibility for not playing a greater role, for not taking a more active part in the political process. But there's a tremendous difference between responsibility for a problem which we run away from and collective guilt for the crimes of racists. The only way we can go forward is to focus on problems and to try to solve these problems intelligently. The greatest guilt an individual, white or black, can have in

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this matter is refusal to use his intelligence. Intelligence may not be enough, but there's no substitute for it, here as elsewhere.

Podhoretz: Mr. Kenneth Clark.*

Clark: How do I—a Negro in America who throughout his undergraduate years and the early part of his professional life identified himself with liberalism—how do I now see American liberalism? I must confess bluntly that I now see white American liberalism primarily in terms of the adjective, "white." And I think one of the important things Negro Americans will have to do is learn how they can deal with a curious and insidious adversary—much more insidious than the out-and-out bigot. And this is not easy. But let me give you some specifics. In this very room, about twenty-four hours ago, a group of social scientists, liberal social scientists, met to talk about how they could be more effective in the study of race relations. The chairman of the department of social psychology at a major university in America said that he had got some money to do something in the area of race relations. So what did he do? He and his department decided that they would not hire anybody who had done any research in race relations; they would hire somebody who had done extremely good experimental work in the psychology of visual perception. When I heard that, I suspected, as a Negro—bitter, distorted—that maybe one reason they did not invite anyone who had done work in race relations was that they might have had to think of a Negro. If I had said this, I would have been accused of bigotry, my liberal white friends would have been unable to understand why I had violated the code of affability.

Second, liberals are predominant in the field of social work. In New York City a situation has existed in our ghettos that is now beyond the capacity of social workers to deal with. Liberal social workers are unable to understand that they are being described as irrelevant, that they have to be ignored and bypassed if the Negro community is to do something about its predicament. Anyone who says this to them is exaggerating. If he's a Negro, well, they have to handle him a little delicately. He can't be rejected completely, but he's a little peculiar.

Third, the public schools in New York City are not headed by bigots, they're not headed by people who say outwardly, "I believe that Negroes are inferior, that they can't learn"; they're headed by liberals. Most principals in the New York City public schools and most of the principals in Harlem schools say, "I am a liberal, I vote the Democratic ticket." Some of them might even say, "I'm a little socialist-inclined." But the fact is that these schools are woefully inferior, Professor Hook. They are not getting better; the evidence is that they are getting worse and worse. And the people who are directly responsible for this are self-identified liberals.

Fourth, our unions, our liberal unions. One could almost set it down as a rule that the more liberal the reputation of a union, the worse the predicament of Negroes in that union will be. We could go right down the list of areas of American life that are not controlled by out-and-out bigots, but that are controlled by individuals who define themselves as liberals, and find that the predicament of the Negro in each of these areas is incomprehensible. One must then conclude—or I must conclude—that there's a peculiar quality to American liberalism. With all due respect to my friend and former colleague and boss, Professor Myrdal, I have come to the conclusion that so far as the Negro is concerned, the ethical aspect of American liberalism or the American Creed is primarily verbal. There is a peculiar kind of ambivalence in American liberalism, a persistent verbal liberalism that is never capable of overcoming an equally persistent illiberalism of action. And so I am forced to agree with James Baldwn that so far as the Negro is concerned, liberalism as it is practiced—I am not talking of it as it is verbalized—*is* an affliction. It is an insidious type of affliction because it attempts to impose guilt upon the Negro when he has to face the hypocrisy of the liberal. The Negro doesn't have to feel guilty when he faces out-and-out bigotry. Mr. Baldwin has been put on the defensive all throughout this discussion by people who don't want to be made uncomfortable by him. Professor Hook is, in effect, saying: "Jim, don't make me uncomfortable. Don't make me face the fact that my Negro friends. . . ." I almost expected Professor Hook to say, "My Negro cook. . . ."

Hook: Oh, I've never had a cook.

Clark: All you've been saying to Mr. Baldwin is: "Don't make me have to look behind my own facade. Don't let me have to find out that my Negro friends aren't really giving it to me straight." I'm glad that James Baldwin is around, because he's helping some of the rest of us cope with this difficult problem of facing the American liberal with the fact that in relation to the Negro he has never been as liberal as he likes to profess.

Glazer: I think it's all very well to say that. Of course, we can read the same sort of thing all the time in the Negro press; it's a widely held point of view. But that doesn't mean that it's right, or that it fits the facts. I don't know how long James Dumpson has been head of the Department of Welfare in New York. What's wrong? Is he being sabotaged by his white assistants? I don't know exactly how many of the social workers employed by the city of New York are Negro—

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probably about a quarter or a fifth. Are they an affliction? They aren't white, of course, but they're all undoubtedly liberal. No, the problem isn't the psychology of the white liberal. The problem is institutions. The Department of Welfare isn't a *white* institution, it's an *institution,* and a Negro like James Dumpson is as limited by it and responsible for it as any white commissioner would be. And if social workers are irrelevant, as Kenneth Clark says they are, it's not because they're white social workers, or because they're liberals; the problem is social work itself. When Mr. Clark talks about education, and says that the schools are worse today than they were eight or ten years ago, I can well believe him. But is it because they're run by white liberals? Of course not. There are a hundred other reasons: the changes in the student body, the difficulty the Board of Education has in dealing with its own Board of Examiners, its own bureacracy, and so on down the line. If the Board of Education begins to do a better job under Calvin Gross, it won't be because he's white or liberal, but because he can find a way to manipulate and manage that institution. Maybe a Negro could do it too, and maybe a Negro couldn't. Many people think that my former boss, Mr. Weaver, hasn't found a way to handle the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency. I don't quite agree with them, but in any case it has nothing to do with his being a Negro. Negroes tend to assume that many of these problems have to do with their being Negro. But the truth is that the problems are a product of the kind of unwieldy institutions we have, the kind of feudal country we have, the kind of recalcitrant special interests that have developed—among them Negro interests. And so we all fight it out. There's certainly a role for the white liberal and the white intellectual—and the Negro liberal and the Negro intellectual—to play, and that is to figure out how to break these bottlenecks in the way of a rational approach to the solution of problems.

As for the people in the streets demanding jobs, I spent a good part of my year in Washington looking for Negroes our agency or others could hire. Now certainly this was partly because there were Negroes in the streets. But that's the way things happen in America. In Chicago they look for Poles to give jobs to, because they're worried about the Polish vote. The situation isn't all that different with Negroes.

Hook: I just want to supplement that remark with respect to universities. The universities that I am acquainted with, and I have seen many—are today trying to recruit qualified Negroes for their teaching staffs. Every informed person knows this. The overwhelming majority of people who teach in American universities are liberal and are free of the discriminatory attitudes we have condemned here. The fact that you can't find many Negroes among them doesn't prove that they are hypocritical. Perhaps there exists a chairman of a psychology department who stupidly believes that a background in the psychology of perception is the proper qualification for a chair in race relations. Perhaps his stupidity is only a pretense for his prejudice, but if so, he is not representative of the universities.

Now of course, the kind of white man who will talk to Mr. Baldwin only about civil rights is someone who is to be condemned, because he is treating Mr. Baldwin as the representative of a group and not as a human being. He is like the people who tell you that they love Jews. Next to anti-Semites, I most despise philo-Semites who profess to love Jews as such. And there are some people who profess to love Negroes as such. I would not call such people liberals at all. But what Mr. Clark is talking about is something quite different. He's delivered himself of a serious indictment for which he has given no convincing bill of particulars at all.

Podhoretz: Mr. Lionel Abel.*

Abel: I want to address this question to you, Mr. Baldwin, but not for the purpose of putting you on the defensive, as Mr. Clark intimated. The main reason most of the questions have been addressed to you is that you made the most provocative remarks. As for my question, its purpose is really clarification. I'm struck by the fact that you stress the particularity of the Negro experience. You stress it in two ways—you stress it negatively: the greater ignominy of the Negroes, who were brought to this country against their will; and you also stress it positively: the greater vivacity or density of Negro life. In both ways you separate Negroes from white people. But then you also say that you want to change the foundations of American society in order to solve the Negro problem—that is, a true solution of the Negro problem, you believe, will require a thorough renovation of American life. In that case, why do you stress the particularity of the Negro experience?

Baldwin: It is not *I* who stresses Negro particularity; it is not *I* who insists on the separation of the Negro experience. Even if I did not say those things, it would still be absolutely true that Negroes came here against their will, and that they were chained, and that they were a source of cheap labor. It would also be true that it is not because *I* decided to live in a ghetto that I'm living in one, but because the white republic decided to put me there and keep me there. Nothing that has been said here, as far as I've heard, contradicts my major premise, which is simply this: that in terms of my own experience and the

* Mr. Abel is a playwright and critic who contributes frequently to COMMENTARY.

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experience of people around me, the liberal record is a shameful record. And the reason it is so shameful is that white liberals—with some exceptions—have been unable to divest themselves of the whole concept of white supremacy and that this concept is reinforced by all the institutions in which power is located. This is why I say that in order for the Negro to become an American citizen, all American citizens will be forced to undergo a change, and all American institutions will be forced to undergo a change too. These institutions, which are established, can only begin to operate to free me and all other Americans by changing. There is no possibility, for example, of the Church in this country accepting me into it as a Christian without becoming a different institution itself. Mr. Abel has implied that I'm trying to have my cake and eat it too—that I stress Negro particularity in terms of its ignominy and then in terms of its vivacity. But I think we all know that a people who are oppressed, and have been oppressed so long, evolve certain techniques for survival—among them things like spareribs, dancing, and watermelon. Now I also happen to think —this is my *own* opinion about my republic—that most of the people in it are terribly divorced from any sense of themselves, I mean their bodies, who they really are. They mainly live by attitudes, and no longer even know how to conduct their private lives: look at what they do to their children. Speaking again only for myself, I do not intend to live that way. I repudiate most of the standards by which Americans live. and I don't see any hope—not for *my* freedom, but for *our* freedom, as long as we live by these standards.

Podhoretz: Mr. Shlomo Katz.*

Katz: Mr. Baldwin, even assuming that the changes you want were to take place, do you think that it would ever be possible for eighteen or nineteen or twenty-two million American Negroes to eradicate from their memory their specific, particular, unique history in the United States—a history which the rest of the population did not experience? If such a thing were possible, then, of course, we could talk about a wholly new society. But if it is not possible, then won't there be new separations which in their own turn will engender differences leading again to discrimination?

Baldwin: It seems to me that there's an assumption revealed in the very way you phrase the question. The history which the Negro endured coming to this country and in this country was not only endured by *him;* it was endured on another level by all the white people who oppressed him. It is, Mr. Hook to the contrary, a collective history. I was here, that did something to me. But you were here on top of me, and that did something to *you*. What happened to the Negro in this country is not simply a matter of *my* memory or *my* history; it's a matter of *American* history and *American* memory. As a Negro, I cannot afford to ignore or deny or overlook it, but the white American necessity is precisely to deny, ignore, and overlook it. Now what I would like to see happen in some day to come is a fusion between what I remember and what you remember. Then there will be no question about our separation. We are really one people and—this is part of our problem, in fact—we spend all of our time denying it.

As for discrimination and prejudice, I'm not so utopian as to suppose that we will ever arrive at a state when people will not discriminate against each other, will not be prejudiced against each other. My complaint here is that you have the power to enforce your doctrine; your vision of me you have the power to make real. I don't care if you don't love me; I just don't want to be kept in a ghetto because you don't love me. I don't care if I live to be a thousand years old and you don't love me; but I want you to let my children go. And since what happened to me here happened to you here too, this cannot be done if we try to go our separate ways to do it.

Hook: I'm not sure that Mr. Baldwin's answer actually meets Mr. Katz's question. Even if we succeeded in reconstructing American life, there would still be Negroes with memories of their past. There would still be Jews with memories of their past. That's not the point. The important thing is whether the individual would be free to identify himself with a group or not. Let us at least try to distinguish our problems. We are fundamentally concerned here with the freedom of the human being to develop his personality and to make his own choices. That freedom should be open to everybody. The kind of culture he wants to live in, the kind of life he wants to live—all that is something to be decided subsequently. Not all whites have a common attitude to their children, Mr. Baldwin. There is a great deal of variation in white attitudes and in white modes of behavior which you don't recognize. And I suspect that there is more variation in Negro life and in Negro attitudes than you yourself have articulated. When I read Ralph Ellison, I get a sense of other dimensions in Negro experience as important as the dimensions you have discussed. In the early 30's, when we were all trying to convert the country to socialism, there were some people who said, "Why do you want to bring the values of a machine civilization to the workers? After all, such a civilization is antipathetic to the best human ideals." But to men who were unemployed and whose families were starving, this was an irrelevant criticism. The "existentialists" of those days often made fun of the ambition to live like people in Flatbush, and to have clean homes. But

* Mr. Katz is editor of *Midstream*.

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that's what the workers wanted, no matter what the critics said.

Baldwin: I get your analogy, Mr. Hook, but I talk about the culture because in fact the culture cannot give the workers of today—these black workers, these black people—*anything at all* without changing. It is not a question of my deciding, after I have been accepted, what kind of culture I will live in. It is now impossible for this culture as it is to give me any place to live at all.

Myrdal: You can say a lot against the white liberals, sure. With a situation like this the whole people becomes a little sick. Certainly there are a lot of rather queer elements in race relations. We can read about them in studies, and Mr. Baldwin writes about them as a novelist. But nevertheless, Mr. Baldwin, you will have to rely upon the liberals because, as somebody said before, it's not the conservatives who are going to fight for the bigger reforms which must be made—to eradicate poverty and everything that poverty implies, to create a fully mobile society where everyone can get ahead through education and hard work, to liberate the *whole* submerged group. The first thing to be done is, of course, to settle this civil-rights business, even if you and I are quite clear that that alone will not solve the problem. The way history is now proceeding, we don't have a very long time ahead of us, and therefore it is really necessary to speed up your efforts to get the reforms through—reforms which cover the whole broad field of how a young man grows up in America if he belongs to the submerged group. But to speed things up, you will have to rely on the liberals—even if sometimes they are not too clear and too courageous, and even if they need you to give them a push. I think the most encouraging thing which has happened in America in recent years is the rebellion of the Negro group, because that rebellion will help the liberals to get into power and do the job that has to be done.

Podhoretz: Mr. William Phillips.*

Phillips: I agree with much of Mr. Baldwin's criticism of American liberalism, and I'm beginning to wonder whether I'm the only white person here who does. Mr. Baldwin spoke of the necessity for a radical transformation of society in order to wipe out discrimination (and to do a few other good things, I hope, too). I'd like to ask him, though, to be concrete and tell us what kind of radical transformation he has in mind. And I'd also like to ask Mr. Hook, conversely, whether he really believes that we can achieve genuine desegregation without some radical transformation of our society.

Hook: To achieve total desegregation, we would indeed have to make very important modifications in American society. As a socialist, a democratic socialist, I take for granted that the problem of poverty still remains to be solved. But I think I've learned something since my early socialist days, and that is that the solution of economic problems is not a cure-all, especially for racial problems. There are some Negroes today who are not economically deprived, and yet they are discriminated against and made to feel that they're not part of the human race. The better off they are, the more sensitive they are to the patterns of discrimination.

I return to what I'm surprised to find so many of you consider irrelevant—namely, the ethical foundations of democracy. Anybody who has raised a family knows what I mean when I say that the good family is one in which there is an equality of concern on the part of the parents for the development of all their children. It's absurd, of course, to make literal comparisons between the family and the community. But the analogy emphasizes the fact that if you believe in equality of concern, it doesn't follow that you must also believe in mechanical equality for everybody at every point. The concern is always for the person, for his individual needs. As applied to the problem we're discussing here, this means not only economic change, but educational change, psychological change. I don't ever anticipate a society in which human beings are going to be happy. Every society finds its own forms of unhappiness. But I do want a society in which the institutions are not so geared as to impose a burden of unnecessary unhappiness upon the people who live under them. The tragic estate of man remains what it is under any system. Let us not add social impediments to it.

Podhoretz: Mr. Baldwin, do you want to have the last word? Our time has almost run out, so it looks like you're going to get it whether you want it or not.

Baldwin: When I talk about a radical transformation of society, I have in mind several very concrete things. I have in mind, for example, that if one really intends to eliminate ghettos, one has to be prepared to deal with the banks, the real-estate boards, and all the other groups and pressures which in fact create the ghettos and keep the children in prison. To deal with these power groups is obviously to undertake a radical transformation. Dr. Myrdal is right—Negroes are not the only submerged and oppressed people in our society. My hope is this, and I think it is our only hope: that when *all* the submerged, when *all* the oppressed, when *all* the penalized, and when *all* the subjugated are finally liberated, then we too will be liberated by the new energy that will be released into the mainstream of American society.

* Mr. Phillips is co-editor of *Partisan Review*.

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ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

A WEDDING IN BROWNSVILLE

A Story

THE WEDDING had been a burden to Dr. Solomon Margolin from the very beginning. True, it was to take place on a Sunday, but Gretl had been right when she said that was the only evening in the week they could spend together. It always turned out that way. His responsibilities to the community made him give away the evenings that belonged to her. The Zionists had appointed him to a committee; he was a board member of a Jewish scholastic society; he had become co-editor of an academic Jewish quarterly. And though he often referred to himself as an agnostic and even an atheist, nevertheless for years he had been dragging Gretl to seders at Abraham Mekheles', a *Landsman* from Sencimin. Dr. Margolin treated rabbis, refugees, and Jewish writers without charge, supplying them with medicines and, if necessary, a hospital bed. There had been a time when he had gone regularly to the meetings of the Senciminer Society, had accepted positions in their ranks, and had attended all the parties. Now Abraham Mekheles was marrying off his youngest daughter, Sylvia. The minute the invitation arrived, Gretl had announced her decision: she was not going to let herself be carted off to a wedding somewhere out in the wilds of Brownsville. If he, Solomon, wanted to go and gorge himself on all kinds of greasy food, coming home at three o'clock in the morning, that was his prerogative.

Dr. Margolin admitted to himself that his wife was right. When would he get a chance to sleep? He had to be at the hospital early Monday morning. Moreover he was on a strict fat-free diet. A wedding like this one would be a feast of poisons. Everything about such celebrations irritated him now: the Anglicized Yiddish, the Yiddishized English, the ear-splitting music and unruly dances. Jewish laws and customs were completely distorted; men who had no regard for Jewishness wore skullcaps; and the reverend rabbis and cantors aped the Christian ministers. Whenever he took Gretl to a wedding or Bar Mitzvah, he was ashamed. Even she, born a Christian, could see that American Judaism was a mess. At least this time he would be spared the trouble of making apologies to her.

USUALLY AFTER BREAKFAST on Sunday, he and his wife took a walk in Central Park, or, when the weather was mild, went to the Palisades. But today Solomon Margolin lingered in bed. During the years, he had stopped attending the functions of the Senciminer Society; meanwhile the town of Sencimin had been destroyed. His family there had been tortured, burned, gassed. Many Senciminers had survived, and, later, come to America from the camps, but most of them were younger people whom he, Solomon, had not known in the old country. Tonight everyone would be there: the Senciminers belonging to the bride's family and the Tereshpolers belonging to the groom's. He knew how they would pester him, reproach him for growing aloof, drop hints that he was a snob. They would address him familiarly, slap him on the back, drag him off to dance. Well, even so, he had to go to Sylvia's wedding. He had already sent out the present.

The day had dawned, gray and dreary as dusk. Overnight, a heavy snow had fallen. Solomon Margolin had hoped to make up for the sleep he was going to lose, but unfortunately he had waked even earlier than usual.

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER'S forthcoming novel, *The Manor*, will be published by Farrar, Straus and Company next fall. An interview with Mr. Singer (by Richard Elman and Joel Blocker) appeared in our November 1963 issue. The present story has been translated from the Yiddish by Chana Faerstein and Elizabeth Pollet.

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Finally he got up. He shaved himself meticulously at the bathroom mirror and also trimmed the gray hair at his temples. Today of all days he looked his age: there were bags under his eyes, and his face was lined. Exhaustion showed in his features. His nose appeared longer and sharper than usual; there were deep folds at the sides of his mouth. After breakfast he stretched out on the living-room sofa. From there he could see Gretl, who was standing in the kitchen, ironing—blonde, faded, middle-aged. She had on a skimpy petticoat, and her calves were as muscular as a dancer's. Gretl had been a nurse in the Berlin hospital where he had been a member of the staff. Of her family, one brother, a Nazi, had died of typhus in a Russian prison camp. A second, who was a Communist, had been shot by the Nazis. Her aged father vegetated at the home of his other daughter in Hamburg, and Gretl sent him money regularly. She herself had become almost Jewish in New York. She had made friends with Jewish women, joined Hadassah, learned to cook Jewish dishes. Even her sigh was Jewish. And she lamented continually over the Nazi catastrophe. She had her plot waiting for her beside his in that part of the cemetery that the Sencimines had reserved for themselves.

Dr. Margolin yawned, reached for the cigarette that lay in an ashtray on the coffee table beside him, and began to think about himself. His career had gone well. Ostensibly he was a success. He had an office on West End Avenue and wealthy patients. His colleagues respected him, and he was an important figure in Jewish circles in New York. What more could a boy from Sencimin expect? A self-taught man, the son of a poor teacher of Talmud? In person he was tall, quite handsome, and he had always had a way with women. He still pursued them—more than was good for him at his age and with his high blood pressure. But secretly Solomon Margolin had always felt that he was a failure. As a child he had been acclaimed a prodigy, reciting long passages of the Bible and studying the Talmud and Commentaries on his own. When he was a boy of eleven, he had sent for a Responsum to the Rabbi of Tarnow who had referred to him in his reply as "great and illustrious." In his teens he had become a master in the *Guide for the Perplexed* and the *Kuzari*. He had taught himself algebra and geometry. At seventeen he had attempted a translation of Spinoza's *Ethics* from Latin into Hebrew, unaware that it had been done before. Everyone predicted he would turn out to be a genius. But he had squandered his talents, continually changing his field of study; and he had wasted years in learning languages, in wandering from country to country. Nor had he had any luck with his one great love, Raizel, the daughter of Melekh the watchmaker. Raizel had married someone else and later had been shot by the Nazis. All his life Solomon Margolin had been plagued by the eternal questions. He still lay awake at night trying to solve the mysteries of the universe. He suffered from hypochondria and the fear of death haunted even his dreams. Hitler's carnage and the extinction of his family had rooted out his last hope for better days, had destroyed all his faith in humanity. He had begun to despise the matrons who came to him with their petty ills while millions were devising horrible deaths for one another.

Gretl came in from the kitchen.

"What shirt are you going to put on?"

Solomon Margolin regarded her quietly. She had had her own share of troubles. She had suffered in silence for her two brothers, even for Hans, the Nazi. She had gone through a prolonged change of life. She was tortured by guilt feelings toward him, Solomon. She had become sexually frigid. Now her face was flushed and covered with beads of sweat. He earned more than enough to pay for a maid, yet Gretl insisted on doing all the housework herself, even the laundry. It had become a mania with her. Every day she scoured the oven. She was forever polishing the windows of their apartment on the sixteenth floor and without using a safety belt. All the other housewives in the building ordered their groceries delivered, but Gretl lugged the heavy bags from the supermarket herself. At night she sometimes said things that sounded slightly insane to him. She still suspected him of carrying on with every female patient he treated.

Now husband and wife sized each other up wryly, feeling the strangeness that comes of great familiarity. He was always amazed at how she had lost her looks. No one feature had altered, but something in her aspect had given way: her pride, her hopefulness, her curiosity. He blurted out:

"What shirt? It doesn't matter. A white shirt."

"You're not going to wear the tuxedo? Wait, I'll bring you a vitamin."

"I don't want a vitamin."

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"But you yourself say they're good for you."

"Leave me alone."

"Well, it's your health, not mine."

And slowly she walked out of the room, hesitating as if she expected him to remember something and call her back.

Dr. Solomon Margolin took a last look in the mirror and left the house. He felt refreshed by the half-hour nap he had had after dinner. Despite his age, he still wanted to impress people with his appearance—even the Senciminers. He had his illusions. In Germany he had taken pride in the fact that he looked like a *Junker,* and in New York he was often aware that he could pass for an Anglo-Saxon. He was tall, slim, blond, blue-eyed. His hair was thinning, had turned somewhat gray, but he managed to disguise these signs of age. He stooped a little, but in company was quick to straighten up. Years ago in Germany he had worn a monocle and though in New York that would have been too pretentious, his glance still retained a European severity. He had his principles. He had never broken the Hippocratic Oath. With his patients he was honorable to an extreme, avoiding every kind of cant; and he had refused a number of dubious associations that smacked of careerism. Gretl claimed his sense of honor amounted to a mania. Dr. Margolin's car was in the garage—not a Cadillac like that of most of his colleagues—but he decided to go by taxi. He was unfamiliar with Brooklyn and the heavy snow made driving hazardous. He waved his hand and at once a taxi pulled over to the curb. He was afraid the driver might refuse to go as far as Brownsville, but he flicked the meter on without a word. Dr. Margolin peered through the frosted window into the wintry Sunday night but there was nothing to be seen. The New York streets sprawled out, wet, dirty, impenetrably dark. After awhile, Dr. Margolin leaned back, shut his eyes, and retreated into his own warmth. His destination was a wedding. Wasn't the world, like this taxi, plunging away somewhere into the unknown toward a cosmic destination? Maybe a cosmic Brownsville, a cosmic wedding? Yes. But why did God —or whatever anyone wanted to call Him—create a Hitler, a Stalin? Why did He need world wars? Why heart attacks, cancers? Dr. Margolin took out a cigarette and lit it mechanically. What had they been thinking of, those pious uncles of his, when they were digging their own graves? Was immortality possible? Was there such a thing as the soul? All the arguments for and against weren't worth a pinch of dust.

The taxi turned onto the bridge across the East River and for the first time Dr. Margolin was able to see the sky. It sagged low, heavy, red as glowing metal. Higher up, a violet glare suffused the vault of the heavens. Snow was sifting down gently, bringing a winter peace to the world, just as it had in the past—forty years ago, a thousand years ago, and perhaps a million years ago. Fiery pillars appeared to glow beneath the East River; on its surface, through black waves jagged as rocks, a tugboat was hauling a string of barges loaded with cars. A front window in the cab was open and icy gusts of wind blew in, smelling of gasoline and the sea. Suppose the weather never changed again? Who then would ever be able to imagine a summer day, a moonlit night, spring? But how much imagination—for what it's worth—does a man actually have? On Eastern Parkway the taxi was jolted and screeched suddenly to a stop. Some traffic accident, apparently. The siren on a police car shrieked. A wailing ambulance drew nearer. Dr. Margolin closed his eyes. Another victim. Someone makes a false turn of the wheel and all a man's plans in this world are reduced to nothing.

Some time later the taxi started moving again. Solomon Margolin was now driving through streets he had never seen before. It was New York, but it might just as well have been Chicago or Cleveland. They passed through an industrial district with factory buildings, warehouses of coal, lumber, scrap iron. Negroes, strangely black, stood about on the sidewalks, staring ahead, their great dark eyes full of a gloomy hopelessness. Occasionally the car would pass a tavern. The people at the bar seemed to have something unearthly about them, as if they were being punished here for sins committed in another incarnation. Just when Solomon Margolin was beginning to suspect that the driver, who had remained stubbornly silent the whole time, had gotten lost or else was deliberately taking him out of his way, the taxi entered a thickly populated neighborhood. They passed a synagogue, a funeral parlor, and there, ahead, was the wedding hall, all lit up, with its neon Jewish sign and Star of David. Dr. Margolin gave the driver a dollar tip and the man took it without uttering a word.

Dr. Margolin entered the outer lobby and immediately the comfortable intimacy of the Senciminers engulfed him. All the faces he

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saw were familiar, though he didn't recognize individuals. Leaving his hat and coat at the checkroom, he put on a skullcap and entered the hall. It was filled with people and music, with tables heaped with food, a bar stacked with bottles. The musicians were playing an Israeli march that was a hodgepodge of American jazz with Oriental flourishes. Men were dancing with men, women with women, men with women. He saw black skullcaps, white skullcaps, bare heads. Guests kept arriving, pushing their way through the crowd, some still in their hats and coats, munching hors d'oeuvres, drinking *schnapps*. The hall resounded with stamping, screaming, laughing, clapping. Flash bulbs went off blindingly as the photographers made their rounds. Seeming to come from nowhere, the bride appeared, briskly sweeping up her train, followed by a retinue of bridesmaids. Dr. Margolin knew everybody, and yet knew nobody. People spoke to him, laughed, winked, and waved, and he answered each one with a smile, a nod, a bow. Gradually he threw off all his worries, all his depression. He became half-drunk on the amalgam of odors: flowers, sauerkraut, garlic, perfume, mustard, and that nameless odor that only Senciminers emit. "Hello, Doctor!" "Hello, Schloime-Dovid, you don't recognize me, eh? Look, he forgot!" There were the encounters, the regrets, the reminiscences of long ago. "But after all, weren't we neighbors? You used to come to our house to borrow the Yiddish newspaper!" Someone had already kissed him: a badly shaven snout, a mouth reeking of whiskey and rotten teeth. One woman was so convulsed with laughter that she lost an earring. Margolin tried to pick it up, but it had already been trampled underfoot. "You don't recognize me, eh? Take a good look! It's Zissl, the son of Chaye Beyle!" "Why don't you eat something?" "Why don't you have something to drink? Come over here. Take a glass. What do you want? Whiskey? Brandy? Cognac? Scotch? With soda? With Coca Cola? Take some, it's good. Don't let it stand. So long as you're here, you might as well enjoy yourself." "My father? He was killed. They were all killed. I'm the only one left of the entire family." "Berish the son of Feivish? Starved to death in Russia—they sent him to Kazakhstan. His wife? In Israel. She married a Lithuanian." "Sorele? Shot. Together with her children." "Yentl? Here at the wedding. She was standing here just a moment ago. There she is, dancing with that tall fellow." "Abraham Zilberstein? They burned him in the synagogue with twenty others. A mound of charcoal was all that was left, coal and ash." "Yosele Budnik? He passed away years ago. You must mean Yekele Budnik. He has a delicatessen store right here in Brownsville—married a widow whose husband made a fortune in real estate."

"*Lechayim,* Doctor! *Lechayim,* Schloime-Dovid! It doesn't offend you that I call you Schloime-Dovid? To me you're still the same Schloime-Dovid, the little boy with the blond side-curls who recited a whole tractate of the Talmud by heart. You remember, don't you? It seems like only yesterday. Your father, may he rest in peace, was beaming with pride. . ." "Your brother Chayim? Your Uncle Oyzer? They killed everyone, everyone. They took a whole people and wiped them out with German efficiency: *gleichgeschaltet!*" "Have you seen the bride yet? Pretty as a picture, but too much make-up. Imagine, a grandchild of Reb Todros of Radzin! And her grandfather used to wear two skullcaps, one in front and one in back." "Do you see that young woman dancing in the yellow dress? It's Riva's sister—their father was Moishe the candlemaker. Riva herself? Where all the others ended up: Auschwitz. How close we came ourselves! All of us are really dead, if you want to call it that. We were exterminated, wiped out. Even the survivors carry death in their hearts. But it's a wedding, we should be cheerful." "*Lechayim,* Schloime-Dovid! I would like to congratulate you. Have you a son or daughter to marry off? No? Well, it's better that way. What's the sense of having children if people are such murderers?"

It was already time for the ceremony, but someone still had not come. Whether it was the rabbi, the cantor, or one of the in-laws who was missing, nobody seemed able to find out. Abraham Mekheles, the bride's father, rushed around, scowled, waved his hand, whispered in people's ears. He looked strange in his rented tuxedo. The Tereshpol mother-in-law was wrangling with one of the photographers. The musicians never stopped playing for an instant. The drum banged, the bass fiddle growled, the saxophone blared. The dances became faster, more abandoned, and more and more people were drawn in. The young men stamped with such force that it seemed the dance floor would break under them. Small boys romped around like goats, and little girls whirled about wildly together. Many of the men were already drunk. They shouted boasts,

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howled with laughter, kissed strange women. There was so much commotion that Solomon Margolin could no longer grasp what was being said to him and simply nodded yes to everything. Some of the guests had attached themselves to him, wouldn't move, and kept pulling him in all directions, introducing him to more and more people from Sencimin and Tereshpol. A matron with a nose covered with warts pointed a finger at him, wiped her eyes, called him Schloimele. Solomon Margolin inquired who she was and somebody told him. Names were swallowed up in the tumult. He heard the same words over and over again: died, shot, burned. A man from Tereshpol tried to draw him aside and was shouted down by several Senciminers calling him an intruder who had no business there. A latecomer arrived, a horse and buggy driver from Sencimin who had become a millionaire in New York. His wife and children had perished, but, already, he had a new wife. The woman, weighted with diamonds, paraded about in a low-cut gown that bared a back, covered with blotches, to the waist. Her voice was husky. "Where did she come from? Who was she?" "Certainly no saint. Her first husband was a swindler who amassed a fortune and then dropped dead. Of what? Cancer. Where? In the stomach. First you don't have anything to eat, then you don't have anything to eat it with. A man is always working for the second husband." "What is life anyway? A dance on the grave." "Yes, but as long as you're playing the game, you have to abide by the rules." "Dr. Margolin, why aren't you dancing? You're not among strangers. We're all from the same dust. Over there you weren't a doctor. You were only Schloime-Dovid, the son of the Talmud teacher. Before you know it, we'll all be lying side by side."

Margolin didn't recall drinking anything but he felt intoxicated all the same. The foggy hall was spinning like a carousel; the floor was rocking. Standing in a corner, he contemplated the dance. What different expressions the dancers wore. How many combinations and permutations of being, the Creator had brought together here. Every face told its own story. They were dancing together, these people, but each one had his own philosophy, his own approach. A man grabbed Margolin and for a while he danced in the frantic whirl. Then, tearing himself loose, he stood apart. Who was that woman? He found his eye caught by her familiar form. He knew her! She beckoned to him. He stood baffled. She looked neither young nor old. Where had he known her—that narrow face, those dark eyes, that girlish smile? Her hair was arranged in the old manner, with long braids wound like a wreath around her head. The grace of Sencimin adorned her—something he, Margolin, had long since forgotten. And those eyes, he was in love with those eyes and had been all his life. He half smiled at her and the woman smiled back. There were dimples in her cheeks. She too appeared surprised. Margolin, though he realized he had begun to blush like a boy, went up to her.

"I know you—but you're not from Sencimin?"

"Yes, from Sencimin."

He had heard that voice long ago. He had been in love with that voice.

"From Sencimin—who are you, then?"

Her lips trembled.

"You've forgotten me already?"

"It's a long time since I left Sencimin."

"You used to visit my father."

"Who was your father?"

"Melekh the watchmaker."

Dr. Margolin shivered.

"If I'm not out of my mind then I'm seeing things."

"Why do you say that?"

"Because Raizel is dead."

"I'm Raizel."

"You're Raizel? Here? Oh my God, if that's true—then anything is possible! When did you come to New York?"

"Some time ago."

"From where?"

"From over there."

"But everyone told me that you were all dead."

"My father, my mother, my brother Hershl . . ."

"But you were married!"

"I was."

"If that's true, then anything is possible!" repeated Dr. Margolin, still shaken by the incredible happening. Someone must have purposely deceived him. But why? He was aware there was a mistake somewhere but could not determine where.

"Why didn't you let me know? After all . . ."

He fell silent. She too was silent for a moment.

"I lost everything. But I still had some pride left."

"Come with me somewhere quieter—anywhere. This is the happiest day of my life!"

"But it's night . . ."

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"Then the happiest night! Almost—as if the Messiah had come, as if the dead had come to life!"

"Where do you want to go? All right, let's go."

Margolin took her arm and felt at once the thrill, long forgotten, of youthful desire. He steered her away from the other guests, afraid that he might lose her in the crowd, or that someone would break in and spoil his happiness. Everything had returned on the instant: the embarrassment, the agitation, the joy. He wanted to take her away, to hide somewhere alone with her. Leaving the reception hall, they went upstairs to the chapel where the wedding ceremony was to take place. The door was standing open. Inside, on a raised platform stood the permanent wedding canopy. A bottle of wine and a silver goblet were placed in readiness for the ceremony. The chapel with its empty pews and only one glimmering light was full of shadows. The music, so blaring below, sounded soft and distant up here. Both of them hesitated at the threshold. Margolin pointed to the wedding canopy.

"We could have stood there."

"Yes."

"Tell me about yourself. Where are you now? What are you doing?"

"It is not easy to tell."

"Are you alone? Are you attached?"

"Attached? No."

"Would you never have let me hear from you?" he asked. She didn't answer.

Gazing at her, he knew his love had returned with full force. Already, he was trembling at the thought that they might soon have to part. The excitement and expectancy of youth filled him. He wanted to take her in his arms and kiss her, but at any moment someone might come in. He stood beside her, ashamed that he had married someone else, that he had not personally confirmed the reports of her death. "How could I have suppressed all this love? How could I have accepted the world without her? And what will happen now with Gretl?—I'll give her everything, my last cent." He looked round toward the stairway to see if any of the guests had started to come up. The thought came to him that by Jewish law he was not married, for he and Gretl had had only a civil ceremony. He looked at Raizel.

"According to Jewish law, I'm a single man."

"Is that so?"

"According to Jewish law, I could lead you up there and marry you."

She seemed to be considering the import of his words.

"Yes, I realize . . ."

"According to Jewish law, I don't even need a ring. One can get married with a penny."

"Do you have a penny?"

He put his hand to his breast pocket, but his wallet was gone. He started searching in his other pockets. Have I been robbed? he wondered. But how? I was sitting in the taxi the whole time. Could someone have robbed me here at the wedding? He was not so much disturbed as surprised. He said falteringly:

"Strange, but I don't have any money."

"We'll get along without it."

"But how am I going to get home?"

"Why go home?" she said, countering with a question. She smiled with that familiar smile of hers that was so full of mystery. He took her by the wrist and gazed at her. Suddenly it occurred to him that this could not be his Raizel. She was too young. Probably it was her daughter who was playing along with him, mocking him. For God's sake, I'm completely confused! he thought. He stood bewildered, trying to untangle the years. He couldn't tell her age from her features. Her eyes were deep, dark, and melancholy. She also appeared confused, as if she, too, sensed some discrepancy. The whole thing is a mistake, Margolin told himself. But where exactly was the mistake? And what had happened to the wallet? Could he have left it in the taxi after paying the driver? He tried to remember how much cash he had had in it, but was unable to. "I must have had too much to drink. These people have made me drunk—dead drunk!" For a long time he stood silent, lost in some dreamless state, more profound than a narcotic trance. Suddenly he remembered the traffic collision he had witnessed on Eastern Parkway. An eerie suspicion came over him: Perhaps he had been more than a witness? Perhaps he himself had been the victim of that accident! He began to examine himself as though he were one of his own patients. He could find no trace of pulse or breathing. And he felt oddly deflated as if some physical dimension were missing. The sensation of weight, the muscular tension of his limbs, the hidden aches in his bones, all seemed to be gone. It can't be, it can't be, he murmured. Can one die without knowing it? And what will Gretl do? He blurted out:

"You're not the same Raizel."

"No? Then who am I?"

"Unless we're both dead."

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"What do you mean?"

"They shot Raizel."

"Shot her? Who told you that?"

She seemed both frightened and confused. Silently she lowered her head like someone receiving the shock of bad news. Dr. Margolin continued to ponder. Apparently Raizel didn't realize her own condition. He had heard of such a stage—what was it called? Hovering in the World of Twilight. But death couldn't be that simple. This kind of survival would be less than oblivion.

He leaned over and whispered in her ear:

"What's the difference? As long as we're together."

"I've been waiting for that all these years."

"Where have you been?"

She didn't answer, and he didn't ask again. He looked around. The empty hall was full, all the seats taken. A ceremonious hush fell over the audience. The music played softly. The cantor intoned the benedictions. With measured steps, Abraham Mekheles led his daughter down the aisle.

COMING IN COMMENTARY

The Revolt Against Ideology	HENRY DAVID AIKEN
Intermarriage Among Jews	MARSHALL SKLARE
The Paranoid Style in American Politics	RICHARD HOFSTADTER
The Eclipse of God	EMIL L. FACKENHEIM
Germany Today	NORMAN BIRNBAUM

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ROBERT ALTER

MAURICE SAMUEL & JEWISH LETTERS

FOR MORE than three decades, Maurice Samuel has been a kind of one-man educational movement in American Jewish life. Anyone with even a passing interest in the East European Jewish milieu, Yiddish and Hebrew literature, Zionism, the future of American Jewry, the nature of anti-Semitism, the role of Judaism in the West, is likely to have read at least one of Samuel's books. The very breadth and variety of his literary enterprise have made it difficult to see exactly what lies behind all this effort and energy. *Little Did I Know*,* Samuel's recently published volume of reminiscence and autobiographical comment, is sometimes informative but not completely satisfying as a document of self-revelation. Avowedly random and episodic—like much of his career in general—it does not adequately suggest the unity of purpose and thought in all his varied activity.

Toward the end of *Little Did I Know*, Samuel makes it clear that he does not regard himself primarily as either a critic-and-novelist or as a purveyor of information but rather as a professional Jew, who, in contrast to his salaried colleagues, has chosen to "peddle piecework." The mildly self-deprecatory image, however disarming, is also partly misleading. Samuel's principal strengths as an expositor of Jewish values and culture—and some of his weaknesses, too—are directly connected with the fact that he is not a professional Jew. For all his commitment to Zionism, the main part of his writing suffers from none of the limitations imposed by the bias of an institution or movement. He addresses no special sector of American Jewry and expounds no official orthodoxy.

One of the important figures of modern Jewish life whom Samuel has admired is Ahad Ha'am, that self-appointed teacher of an earlier generation, but the difference in the tone of their respective enterprises is instructive. Ahad Ha'am, writing in Hebrew for a relatively homogeneous group of newly emancipated Jewish intellectuals, attempted to harmonize traditional Jewish values with modern secular culture in a style that was unmistakably legislative and prescriptive. Samuel, with a roughly similar general purpose and a radically different audience, strikes a personal, confessional note. *Little Did I Know* is by no means his first piece of autobiographical writing. Of the twelve books published since 1940 in the major phase of his career, important elements of autobiography appear in all but three, and of the latter, two are novels. Whether Samuel is talking about the early kibbutzim, the fiction of Peretz, or the difference between Jewish and pagan moral codes, he begins not from the facts but from his own discovery of them. As he is a self-made scholar in so many areas, so he is in general a self-made Jew, and his writing continually reflects the excitement of discovery and acquisition characteristic of the autodidact. But the personal vividness that his presentation of material gains in this way is not nearly so significant as the kind of perspective in which such a presentation places the idea of being a Jew. To be a Jew does not mean to live by any kind of fixed prescription, whether theological, ideological, or sociological. It is conceived rather as a process, a personal dialogue with Jewish historical experience—that is, with Jewish knowledge—from the Bible through modern times.

The autobiographical framework, then, of so many of Samuel's books, is a logical necessity because the real subject is not a set of ideas, lives, or events, but the author's encounter with them. *Certain People of the Book*, for example, is not so much a book about the Bible as a vehicle enabling readers to participate in the writer's own imaginative response to some Biblical characters. *Certain People* makes no attempt to analyze the narrative art of the Bible or to defend it as literature. It

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* *Little Did I Know: Recollections and Reflections*, Knopf, 326 pp., $5.95.

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offers, instead, concrete evidence of the literary power that must have generated the writer's responses, and invites the reader to initiate a similar relationship of his own with the original text. It is entirely appropriate that Samuel's more successful non-polemical books should turn out to be attractive introductions, not definitive expositions. To the extent that Samuel's work is a continuing process of self-exploration and self-definition, it makes no more sense to speak of him as a professional Jew than as a professional human being. But in his role of interpreter of a culture unfamiliar to his American audiences, he has also aimed in some ways at selling that culture, and this aspect of his writing may partly justify the label of professionalism.

Samuel reminds us in several of his books that he came to Jewish life from the outside—or, more precisely, after being on the inside and leaving, he had to return as an outsider. His childhood was spent in a traditional, if not Orthodox, Jewish home, first in Rumania, and then in an immigrant section of Manchester. In his adolescent years, he became a militant socialist; the attachment, however, proved to be transitory. From socialism he moved to socialist Zionism, to relearning Yiddish and studying Hebrew, and eventually to a total involvement in Jewish life. The traditional Jewish world whose expositor he was to become he had to learn largely by book, using fragmentary memories of childhood as prompters. This necessity to reconstruct the past through painstaking effort qualified him perfectly to recreate it for others who had no knowledge of it. Samuel at his best is really brilliant in his ability to explain a world alien to Western readers by locating it on cultural coordinates familiar to them. It would be tempting to put together an anthology of his best achievements in this difficult art of cultural transcription: his explanation of the difference between praying and *davvening* in *Prince of the Ghetto,* his initial comments in *The World of Sholom Aleichem* on Tevya the Dairyman as a cultural and sociological anomaly, his ingenious imitation in English of medieval Hebrew exegetical style and method in *The Gentleman and the Jew,* his discussions of the distinctive qualities of Yiddish in both *Prince of the Ghetto* and *The World of Sholom Aleichem.*

The challenge of imaginative reconstruction of older cultures has exercised a continuing fascination over Samuel—a fact attested to by his sustained interest in the historical novel as well as by his writings on East European Jewry. It is just this activity of reconstruction that has released his most creative energies: the one thing he can clearly do with words better than most writers is to make the past moment present in all its palpable concreteness with all its flow of emotional life. In the Book of Kings, for instance, after Elijah's terrible triumph over the idolatrous priests, as the long drought is broken by a sudden storm, the Bible tells us that "the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel." *Certain People of the Book* translates the cryptic verse into dramatic particularity:

> He who is to be the forerunner of the Messiah ran that night before one of the vilest human beings, ran through the sheets of water and the dazzle of lightning, to celebrate and to announce simultaneously the salvation of the king and the people. Breathless with exertion and exultation, beside himself with the thought that his mission was ended, he sped through tangled grasses and thickening mud, and every drumroll of thunder was a shout of triumph in his ears. . . . He ran, unaware of tiredness . . . a ghastly parody and rehearsal of what shall be his reward at the end of days.

The ability to get this close to the feel of distant experience, at the same time setting the experience in a large imaginative context (here, Elijah's messianic role), has helped make Samuel's evocations of the Jewish past both convincing and intellectually engaging. It is no accident that the best of his books from many points of view, *The World of Sholom Aleichem,* is the one devoted entirely to such an enterprise of reconstruction. But the same turn of mind which has made him so successful in resurrecting buried worlds also places a limitation on his vision of modern Jewish life.

To want to recreate a past, one must care about it. And it should be said that Samuel can care about his subjects wholeheartedly while excluding any falsifying note of sentimentality from his presentation of them. Though his portrait of the *shtetl* is a loving one, he remembers the stench of the refuse-strewn alleys and the arrogance of the community's rich, as well as the fragrance of Sabbath dishes and the gentle piety of the *shtetl's* more exemplary figures. Nevertheless, in his affection for the world of tradition, he never responds adequately to what is almost certainly the central fact of modern Jewish history—the breakdown of that traditional world. The

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agonizing question of continuity between historical Judaism and modern Jews is answered with too easy an affirmative by Samuel. Commenting on Weizmann, Ahad Ha'am, and Bialik in *The Professor and the Fossil*, he admits that these creators of the Zionist renaissance "did discard some of the symbols and terms of accepted orthodoxy," but, he hastens to add, "in effect they were looking for new symbols and terms for the teaching of the original God-inspired ethos." The vagueness of "in effect" is symptomatic of an evasion at the most crucial point of the argument. Especially in the case of Ahad Ha'am, whose thought has been so central to Zionist ideology, it would be much truer to say the opposite: he used the symbols and terms of accepted orthodoxy to teach a new, profoundly secularist doctrine of national existence. What Ahad Ha'am and his followers actually attempted to do was to show how one can live by a God-inspired ethos without believing in either God or inspiration.

In this connection, Samuel's response to Bialik is particularly revealing. The Hebrew poet has meant a great deal to him. It was his discovery of some of Bialik's poems in Yiddish that first made him question his youthful dismissal of the Jewish people; through the poems he became aware of unsuspected creativity in what he had thought of as a moribund group. The two men were personally acquainted, and lectured together when Bialik toured this country in 1926. Samuel's scattered comments on Bialik constitute an intelligent appreciation. He is fully aware of Bialik's power and originality as a poet, never falls into the kind of cant formula that pigeonholes Bialik as "mouthpiece of the folk." He is alive to some of the darker sides of Bialik's poetry, its haunting images of poverty, and its prophetic wrath. Yet Samuel gives no evidence of having confronted the depths of despair in the Hebrew poet, the horror of the abyss that is frozen into the heart of some of his greatest poems. Samuel esteems Bialik as the entrepreneur of modern Hebrew culture, and neglects the Bialik who in poems like "Before the Bookshelf" came to see the sacred books of Jewish experience—his belief in their sanctity gone—as the breeding place of decay, darkness, death.

This is of course not to suggest that Samuel should have been occupied with carrying a message of doom to his popular audiences all these years. But there is something perhaps too cheerfully healthy-minded in his conception of the modern Jew's relationship to his antecedents. He assumes that Jewish self-alienation is a purely negative and at least partly remediable phenomenon. The Jew is unable to accept or respect himself because he knows nothing about himself except what the outside world has imposed upon him. The way to break down the self-hatred, then, is to acquire Jewish knowledge. There is clearly much soundness in this idea, just as it is reasonable to suppose that ignorance is in fact a major cause of self-alienation in vast numbers of Jews. But for others, even many who have been long immersed in Jewish life and thought, there simply has been no alternative to alienation. The one important aspect of modern Hebrew and Yiddish culture which is left out of Samuel's account is the fact that much of it was created by alienated Jews, paradoxically finding in their own desperate isolation and frustration the source of their creativity.

Samuel has written more than once of the peculiar polarity of Jewish literature from the Bible onward: on the one hand, an exalted sense of the group's importance and uniqueness; on the other, merciless self-castigation. As part of the general continuity which he sees between traditional and modern Jewish culture, he envisages the sharply critical phase of Yiddish and Hebrew literature as a continuation of this age-old prophetic impulse in Jewish writers. But prophetic castigation is always meant to be therapeutic; it intends to transform its auditors. By contrast, at least some of the anger one finds in modern Jewish writers suggests no such undercurrent of hope: the late poems of Bialik, the novels of Y.H. Brenner, some of Peretz's stories reveal frustrated rage, corrosive contempt, not corrective indignation. The interpretation of Peretz in *Prince of the Ghetto* is inadequate precisely because of its failure to respond to this deeply alienated quality of modern Jewish sensibility. Samuel insists that Peretz's only significant achievement is his crystallization in his stories of the ideals and spirit of the Jewish folk. He even admits at one point that everything in *Prince of the Ghetto* which is not folktale or Hasidic lore was included "merely in deference to the record." This is surely a foreshortened view of Peretz. As Leslie Fiedler said in these pages years ago, Peretz as a man and a writer was not a prince of the ghetto but a product of its breakdown.

If Samuel's vision of old world and new tends to be one-eyed, he has at least managed

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to achieve something like a complete view of an impressive variety of complex phenomena. His books belong on reading lists: in any of half a dozen areas, the Samuel volume will turn out to be the most recommendable introduction to the subject. *Harvest in the Desert* is probably the most balanced and readable short history of Zionism; the same is true of *Level Sunlight* as a consideration of the basic problems affecting Israel's future. *The Great Hatred* is as intelligent and far-reaching a discussion of the nature of anti-Semitism as can be found in one slim volume. And, of course, *The World of Sholom Aleichem* is the most vivid and complete brief account of Russian Jewish life two and three generations ago.

Moreover, Samuel has not dissipated himself in covering all this ground. He writes about ideas and events he has lived with: despite his prodigious output, there is no evidence in his books of hasty research in order to "do" a particular subject. On the other hand, there are signs that the years of addressing himself to a popular audience may have had some debilitating effect on his writing. Samuel, of course, cannot be criticized for choosing to be a popularizer. The centrality of the folk is a point of ideology for him, and that idea itself implies the need to write for the people, not for any special group within it. He has generally done this with great competence, managing to avoid glibness or superficiality while presenting his material clearly and non-technically. And yet there is an unevenness of verbal texture that persists through virtually all his writing. Samuel is perhaps dangerously facile with language. The very fact that he can use words with great precision and taste makes one suspect that he is sometimes simply careless. The writer who can describe Hasidism in *The World of Sholom Aleichem* as "life at its jolliest" (*sic*) is also capable, in the same book, of the kind of finely selective use of language one finds in his comparison of Russian and Jewish folk melodies: "As the sadness of great stretches of space informs the songs of the Russian peasant, so the sadness of great stretches of time haunts the truncated words, the elisions and repetitions of these minor Jewish chants." It can be damaging for a writer not to feel the pressure of intellectually rigorous demands from his readers. He may end by improvising his own uncertain standards of verbal accuracy and stylistic decorum, which can blur the focus of his exposition. Thus: "The Bible is a vast blend of folkloristic growths and individual creations; and this two-in-one character is of its essence as record."

Another problem implicit in the attempt to address a large popular audience on questions of Jewish concern is the difficulty in knowing to whom one is talking. How does one decide on a tone and manner of presentation that will be appropriate for everyone from sisterhood ladies to intellectuals ignorant of Judaism and curious non-Jews? On the whole, Samuel has handled this difficulty as well as could be expected, but it is a problem for him, vaguely perceptible in most of the non-polemical writing, obviously acute in his book on Peretz. The author of *Prince of the Ghetto* seems at some points uneasy about his audience. He is unwilling to trust Peretz to his readers, even with the aid of abundant introductory comment and notes. He insists that the Yiddish writer cannot be translated, must be retold for a Western audience—which means that he is continually interposing a narrative persona of his own making between the reader and Peretz. The degree of subtlety and artistic finesse lost through this procedure becomes clear by comparing Samuel's retelling of "Devotion Unto Death" with the Howe-Greenberg translation of the same story in *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories*. The most obvious thing about the story as it reads in straight translation is that it is a folktale told by a sophisticated writer. But the magic of the story is marred in Samuel's version because he feels he must constantly remind us that it is not silly to read this kind of story, that it "is a fairy tale in which the truths taught are of the spirit." If the book is meant for a wide range of readers, this would seem to be aimed at one far end of the range, in the direction of the simple-minded.

In such a varied enterprise, frequently directed as it has been to an uncertain audience, it is natural that individual volumes should be flawed, some of them perhaps seriously limited. But the surprising feature of Samuel's books is that, taken together, they have a special kind of cumulative power. The reason is, I think, the unified perspective in which he sees all his subjects. Despite the fact that he is a popularizer, peddling piecework both the written and spoken word, despite his avowed lack of originality as a thinker, he has continually viewed the idea of being a Jew against the background of eternity. If his presentation of his subject has been episodic, his conception of it has not. He has

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written so often of the recent Jewish past not because it is colorful and for that reason worth "preserving," but because Jewish history for him, as for the Bible, is universal history, is the tentative, tortuous working out of a cosmic experiment. The one book of his which is central to all the others is *The Gentleman and the Jew*, where he formulates his general conception of Western history. Samuel sees Judaism, and through it, Christianity, as an attempt—often seemingly a desperate one—to convert pagan history, to establish cooperation instead of combat as the basis for human society. Because the world's fate is necessarily implicated in the fate of the people who have been the bearers of this redemptive idea, the Jewish subjects Samuel writes of are never imagined parochially.

The question, then, sometimes raised about him, whether he could have achieved more, been less narrow, had he not limited himself to his Jewish preoccupation, is really meaningless. In dealing with Jewish problems he has directly or indirectly been concerned with universal problems; he has simply chosen what is for him the most personally relevant way to approach the large issues. This connection between particular and universal is especially clear in his treatment of two central themes in his writing: anti-Semitism and Zionism. If one assumes that anti-Semitism is just another prejudice against a minority group—an assumption perhaps difficult to sustain in the lurid light of the Final Solution—then *The Great Hatred* is not really about anti-Semitism. Samuel, writing at the end of the 30's, before the world had begun to be haunted by the organized madness of death camps, insisted on the demonological nature of anti-Semitism and on totalitarianism's inner necessity to destroy the Jewish idea. His book is not about the plight of the Jewish people but about how the Jews are implicated in the world's choice between an ethic of mindless power and an ethic based on respect for the dignity of the individual.

Similarly, the Jewish nationalism Samuel has argued for in his books on Israel is never narrow or chauvinistic. The Hebrew prophets, as he understands them, imparted to the world the idea that the nation had to be transformed into a morally responsible entity. "Unless the nation is a moral thing," he writes of the prophetic view, "the individual cannot be moral." This seminal idea has obviously not taken very well in the soil of Western history. Christianity substantially left nationhood in the hands of the pagan world, while the Jews themselves have struggled with the idea rather than realized it. Israel for Samuel must ultimately justify itself by an unwavering commitment to continue the struggle. This sense of high purpose in the Zionist enterprise may occasionally lead him to overvalue the facts, as in his conception of Weizmann as a second Moses, or in his adulation of the early Palestinian pioneers, whom he sees as the literal heirs of the prophets. But in general, his conviction that Israel should be working out an idea of universal significance has helped him to view the country in a healthy critical perspective. He has preserved a sympathetic insight into what Israel at its best has attempted to be, but he continues to demand that Israel never be con tent merely with what it actually is.

What may not be apparent from reading one or two of Samuel's books is that the ultimate source of his thought and effort is religious. It appears that in the years following his initial return to Jewish life, he gradually developed the conviction that the moral aspirations of Jewish tradition do reflect a divine will and purpose, if not in the direct manner claimed by the tradition itself. Because this conviction has been so basic a motive in his career, there is an element of truth in the image of preacher which this lecturer and man of letters uses to characterize himself. Toward the end of his most recent book, he tries to explain why he has spent so much of his life exploring and expounding the particulars of one tradition:

> In that substance [Jewish tradition] the spirit expresses itself, having no other means of expression for us. The One God of whom I get glimpses speaks to me, as a Jew, *in that substance*, making it the starting point and medium of my perception of the world, my mode of entrance into it and my identification with it.

The italic emphasis which Samuel feels compelled to use here, and so frequently elsewhere, may indicate how keenly he senses his position to be an embattled one, how isolated he has sometimes felt in defending it. But the kind of religious commitment expressed is sane and intellectually plausible. It has given his books, whatever their limitations, breadth of outlook and an underlying moral seriousness. For a man with these convictions and this sense of purpose, it would be impertinent to suggest that he could have used his talents better.

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THE OSWALD AFFAIR

LÉO SAUVAGE

ON THE DAY after the murder of President Kennedy, a New York lawyer, commenting on the case against Lee Harvey Oswald as it had been revealed up to that point, was quoted in the *Journal American* as saying that "The District Attorney has a suspect, but not much more." As a Frenchman, I thought it a strange coincidence that this lawyer's name should have been Emile Zola Berman. Unlike the suspect whom the first Emile Zola brought back from Devil's Island, however, Lee Harvey Oswald—even were he to be proved innocent—can never be brought back from the place to which he has been sent. But *could* he be proved innocent? If we believe that a man must be considered innocent until he is proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, we can already assert that Lee Harvey Oswald *was* innocent. For to the unbiased, critical mind, the case against him is a tissue of improbabilities, contradictions, and outright falsifications.

Is this a hasty judgment? Instead of saying "already," which suggests that any further information we get will strengthen my own impression of Oswald's innocence, should I not at least have said "still," implying that new evidence may yet be brought forward to sustain the almost universal American conviction of Oswald's guilt? Such prudence would certainly be the only proper attitude to take in any other case. But not in this one. All the available evidence against Oswald has either been leaked or eagerly and even ruthlessly spelled out—whether true, half-true, or demonstrably false; whether pertinent, confused, or obviously irrelevant. So far as Dallas is concerned, the case was proclaimed "cinched" by Chief Will Fritz of the Homicide Bureau as early as November 23, one day after the assassination. The following day, only two hours after Jack Ruby had disposed of Oswald in the basement of Dallas Police Headquarters, the case against him was declared "closed" by Police Chief Jesse Curry and by District Attorney Henry Wade who boasted that he had "sent men to the electric chair with less evidence." That same evening, in a televised press conference whose transcript will stand forever in the international annals of justice as an example of fantastic irresponsibility, Wade spoke the final word for the Dallas authorities: "I would say that without any doubt he [Oswald] is the killer . . . there is no question that he [Oswald] was the killer of President Kennedy . . ."

Of course, there is still the as yet uncompleted investigation of the Presidential Commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren. May *it* not turn up new evidence? It is difficult to see how. The Warren Commission, though it has its own legal staff and the right to subpoena witnesses, will nevertheless depend for its technical information on the FBI investigation, and the results of that investigation, though officially still confidential, have already been revealed to the world —and revealed, apparently, before the Warren Commission even received the FBI report from the Justice Department. On December 3, while dutifully publishing a statement by a Justice Department spokesman announcing that the FBI report had not yet been sent to the Attorney General for submission to President Johnson, the evening papers nevertheless felt confident in coming out with enormous banner headlines like "OSWALD LONE KILLER. FBI REPORT TO PROVE IT" (New York *Journal American*). The stories quoted anonymous "government sources," but the identity of these sources was no mystery at all in Washington: the FBI itself had leaked the "probable conclusions" of its report even while the report was still being written. Six days later, on December 9, the Justice Department, acting on instructions from the White House, delivered the now completed report directly to the Warren Commission. Quite naturally, the Commission had asked that nothing be made public until it had reviewed the document and taken whatever action seemed appropriate. Yet the New York *Times* of December 10 was able to put the following headline over the very story in which (in passing) it mentioned the Commission's desire to keep the report confidential: "OSWALD ASSASSIN BEYOND A DOUBT, FBI CONCLUDES. HE ACTED ALONE AND DID NOT KNOW RUBY, SAYS REPORT TO WARREN INQUIRY PANEL."

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Thus, after the "press and television conviction" of Lee Oswald in Dallas, a second press and television conviction took place in Washington. And just as the Dallas authorities had forced the hand of any jury that would have heard the Oswald case, so the FBI has forced the hand of the Warren Commission. With the help of all the mass media, Oswald's guilt has now twice been sold to the public—despite the fact that no one has even so much as ventured to explain why a psychopathic regicide, acting (as we shall see) under circumstances that would make his capture inevitable, should renounce the ultimate satisfaction of glorying in his deed before the eyes of the world. I really do not see, therefore, why only those of us who are skeptical about the case against Oswald should await further information.

Before going on to raise some of the specific questions that Oswald's accusers should be forced to answer, let me make one final remark. I am a reporter and not a detective. Thus far, however, it is only the reporters, those "amateur investigators into the Kennedy assassination" whom Max Lerner in a recent column sarcastically advised to take "a much needed rest," who have shown up what Mr. Lerner himself described as "the tissue of guesswork, ignorance and contradictions in which the law enforcement officials were caught." In the face of so systematically prejudiced an investigation as has so far been made into the President's assassination, how else will the truth ever be arrived at if "amateurs" fail to ask the questions that the professionals have obfuscated or left unanswered?

1. Did Oswald Have an Alibi?

Though there have been a number of interesting official variations concerning certain quite important details, it is now an undisputed fact that Lee Oswald was in the second-floor lunchroom of the Texas School Book Depository on Elm Street a very short time after three shots were fired at the Presidential motorcade from a window on the sixth floor of the building. He was seen in the lunchroom by two witnesses: the manager of the Texas School Book Depository, Mr. Roy S. Truly, and a motorcycle policeman who was the first officer to enter the building.

The fact of Oswald's presence on the second floor, it should be noted, was first presented to the public as evidence *against* him. In his unforgettable press conference of Sunday, November 24 ("to detail some of the evidence against Oswald for the assassination of the President"), District Attorney Wade put it this way: "A police officer, immediately after the assassination, ran into the building and saw this man [Oswald] in a corner and tried to arrest him. But the manager of the building said he was an employee and it was all right . . ." In emphasizing that Oswald had barely escaped arrest *"immediately after the assassination,"* the District Attorney was obviously trying to convey the impression that Oswald had virtually been caught red-handed. He therefore neglected to mention that the place in which Oswald was (as it were) "cornered" was the second-floor lunchroom; nor did he indicate that the police officer and the manager of the building had described Oswald as holding a Coca-Cola bottle in his hand. These details, however, had been announced the day before by Police Chief Jesse Curry, whose Saturday afternoon statement remains very intriguing. Chief Curry started by saying that he could tell from the sound of the shots that they had come from the School Book Depository, and that "right away" he had radioed an order from his car to surround and search the building. Then he told of the first officer to reach it, of this officer climbing the stairs together with the building manager (Mr. Truly), and of the two men seeing Oswald in the lunchroom. There were, he added, "other persons" in the lunchroom as well.

I can see only one explanation for the emphasis both Mr. Wade and Chief Curry placed on how soon *after* the shots Oswald was seen inside the building, and for the singular statement by Chief Curry—never repeated, but never corrected as a mistake either—to the effect that there were other witnesses to Oswald's presence in the lunchroom besides the motorcycle policeman and Mr. Truly. According to the version of the story given out by the police on Friday evening, Oswald had been stopped when leaving the building after the assassination, but had been allowed to proceed when Mr. Truly identified him as an employee. This version collapsed when Mr. Truly told the real story to the press, revealing that he had identified Oswald as an employee in the lunchroom, and not at the street door or on the sidewalk. Thus, there were no witnesses to testify to the exact time Oswald left the Elm Street building—and since this raised the possibility that he might claim to have left it *before* the crime, it became important to stress his presence in the building after the shots had been fired.

Chief Curry's statement that Oswald was in the lunchroom "among others" has never been retracted. But unless we are to impute criminal negligence, we must assume that on this point Mr. Curry was simply ill informed: if there really were other persons in the lunchroom at the time Oswald entered it and nobody bothered to question them about the exact moment and about his behavior, we could stop and draw our conclusions right now. For the exact moment that Oswald entered the lunchroom is of the very first importance in determining whether it was physically possible for him to have been on the sixth floor when the shots were fired.

All the reports we have—including the statements by Wade and Curry on television and those given to individual reporters—place Oswald in

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the lunchroom an extremely short time after the crime. Bob Considine of the Hearst Press, for example, was told that Oswald had been questioned inside the building "almost before the smoke from the assassin's gun had disappeared." As for me, I have the direct testimony of one of the two witnesses, Mr. Roy Truly. When I asked him whether it had taken a long time for him and the motorcycle policeman to reach the lunchroom, he answered (apparently not realizing what I was driving at): "Oh, no! It was as soon as the last shot was fired when I saw the officer come running. As a matter of fact, it was so soon afterwards that I don't believe he was riding in the motorcade. He must have been off his motorcycle, standing nearby. Anyhow, it was right away after the shots. I knew they were shots, but had no idea they were fired from the building. I thought the officer wanted to get to the roof for a better look and I immediately offered to show him how. We ran to the freight elevators in the back of the building because the front elevators do not go beyond the fourth floor, but the two freight cars had both been left somewhere up in the top floors and we took the stairs, the officer ahead of me. When I reached the second-floor landing, the officer was already at the open door of the lunchroom, some twenty or twenty-five feet away. No, I couldn't tell you exactly how much time it took, all this, but it wasn't long . . ."

The obvious question, then, is whether there was enough time for Lee Oswald—if he fired the shots from the front window on the sixth floor—to run to the staircase in the back (that is, on the opposite side of the building), hide the gun, and go down four flights of stairs to the lunchroom *before* the motorcycle policeman and Mr. Truly saw him there, not panting, not looking suspicious, and probably sipping a Coke (which means additional time for getting it out of the vending machine and opening it).

We "amateur investigators" obviously have no means of doing that type of checking. But did the professional investigators—the Dallas police, the FBI, the Secret Service—do it? During the week following the assassination of Oswald, the FBI spent a lot of time in and around the Texas School Book Depository. Since the press was not allowed inside the building while the FBI was there, we do not know whether and how Oswald's movements immediately after the shooting were checked. But in order to find out whether Oswald had an alibi or not, it was not only necessary to get as close an estimate as possible of the time he would have needed to make his way from the sixth to the second floor. It was also necessary to find out precisely how much time elapsed between the last shot and the moment the motorcycle policeman and Mr. Truly saw Oswald in the lunchroom.

"I told them, as I just told you, that it was a very short time," Roy Truly answered when I asked him whether there had been any special tests to determine the number of seconds he and the motorcycle policeman lost in the lobby with the elevators before starting to climb the stairs. When I pressed the point, he said: "No, nothing else . . ." And none of the many reporters and photographers who for days kept a close watch on the Texas School Book Depository, writing and taking pictures of the various re-enactments of the assassination staged on Elm Street, ever saw a motorcycle policeman running into the building under the eyes of detectives with stopwatches in their hands.

2. The Elm Street Building

Whoever planned to assassinate President Kennedy from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository must have known that he would have almost no chance to escape. Since no other building in the area had the right vantage on the motorcade, his position would be revealed as soon as the shots were fired. Furthermore, with so many policemen around, he could be sure that the building would be surrounded and sealed up before he could possibly reach an exit on the ground floor. Nor—since the School Book Depository occupies a whole block, with a parking lot in back and no contiguous construction—was there any way of escaping through the roof.

We know now, however—because Lee Oswald walked out several minutes after the murder without being stopped or even noticed—that the building which Chief Curry had "right away ordered to be surrounded and searched," was *not* immediately surrounded and sealed up. We even know that through the monstrous negligence of the three police services involved, anybody could leave—or enter—not only during the first few minutes, but later as well. Roy Truly told me that when he came back from the roof with the motorcycle policeman (after seeing Oswald in the lunchroom) there were "a whole lot of people with the officers on the second floor, at least fifteen or twenty persons." He described them as "reporters, photographers, office workers from the other floors, probably also outsiders, I guess." Even after the three doors of the building had finally been blocked off by the police, people who said they were employees returning from lunch were allowed to enter, and people who said they were reporters or showed a camera were allowed to leave. If the assassin was someone other than Oswald, and if, for some reason, he had not left the building during the long minutes when nobody was watching the doors, he could still have slipped away in the midst of all this traffic.

After such an incredible mess, it could not have been an easy job for the FBI to find out several days later who, among the ninety-one employees at least, had been in the building at the time of the murder. Witnesses had mentioned from the

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beginning that there were several persons watching the motorcade from the windows of the fifth floor, and there may have been more watching from the other windows, as well as some who had remained in their offices. Who were these people and what light could they shed on the slaying?

"Carrying his Coke," said *Time* magazine, "Oswald ambled into a nearby office. A switchboard operator said, 'Wasn't that terrible—the President being shot?' Oswald mumbled something unintelligible, went out of the office, walked down the steps and slipped through the crowd outside . . ." Never having heard of any switchboard operator in a nearby office until I read this account, I asked Mr. Truly about her. Yes, he confirmed, that was the story told to the FBI when—on the following week—they finally began questioning everyone who works in the School Depository. But, he added, it wasn't the switchboard operator who spoke to Oswald. It was another woman working in the same office, and yes, that office is "right next to the lunchroom." Did either of the two women notice the noise Oswald must have made in the corridor rushing in from the sixth floor? Mr. Truly didn't know. Nor did he remember whether the FBI had asked them.

3. The Chicken Bones

Entering the storage room on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, the police found, near the window from which the shots had been fired, an empty cigarette pack and the remains of a meal: a piece of partly eaten fried chicken, some chicken bones in a paper bag, and an empty Coca-Cola bottle. Officially announced Friday afternoon on television by Captain Fritz, this discovery was published in every newspaper around the world and taken as an indication of the cold-bloodedness of the assassin who had calmly waited, eating chicken and smoking cigarettes (though there was no mention of cigarette butts), for the moment to shoot.

Nobody doubted that the person who had eaten the chicken was the assassin, and some expected the police to pump Oswald's stomach in order to prove that he was that person. Chief Curry, however, denied that there had ever been any such intention. He had enough evidence against Oswald, he said, to dispense with stomach pumps. But like Captain Fritz, Curry seemed perfectly convinced that the chicken was Oswald's, and on Sunday the FBI agent on the scene, Gordon Shanklin, made it final by informing Fred Powledge of the New York *Times* that a print of Oswald's left index finger had been found on the paper bag containing the chicken bones.

Meanwhile, in his eagerness to establish that Lee Oswald had been in the Elm Street building at the time of the murder, Captain Fritz had triumphantly announced to press and television that no fewer than six witnesses had seen Oswald there shortly before the shooting. One of these witnesses, Captain Fritz said, had invited Oswald to come outside with him to watch the approaching motorcade from the street, and Fritz seemed to attach great importance to the fact that Oswald, after refusing the invitation, had asked that witness to send the freight elevator back up to him.

The chief of the Dallas Homicide Bureau did not explain how a hand-operated freight elevator could be sent anywhere without an operator in it, but in any event, side by side with the news of Oswald's chicken lunch, the papers printed the story of his having been seen by several witnesses only so short a time before the crime that the Presidential motorcade was already approaching. The contradiction was obvious, and significant, for if Oswald hadn't had enough time to have eaten that chicken between the departure of Captain Fritz's witnesses and the assassination, was someone else waiting—and eating chicken—near the sixth-floor window from which President Kennedy was shot? Was that second man Oswald's accomplice? Or was he perhaps the real assassin in whose place Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested?

I do not know whether the Dallas investigators spent any time pondering these dramatic questions. Nor do I know what laboratory tests—if any—were made on the remaining piece of chicken and the bones, in order, for example, to find tooth marks (Captain Fritz could have learned about these possibilities in Söderman and O'Connell's handbook, *Modern Criminal Investigation* without waiting for Soviet criminologist I. Karpets to remind him of them). Nor, again, do I know whether anyone in the Dallas Police Department thought of making plaster casts, or at least taking photographs, of the chicken leftovers before throwing them away. What is certain is that from Monday the 25th on, the chicken bones were never mentioned again. When, the following Wednesday, I expressed my concern over the question to Assistant District Attorney James Bowie in Dallas, he seemed not to share it at all. According to Mr. Bowie, Oswald was not the person who ate the chicken. This I had already assumed from Captain Fritz's witnesses. Moreover, Mr. Bowie said—and this I had not previously heard—it had been discovered that the chicken was eaten and discarded near the window the day *before* the President was shot. Had the police found the man who had eaten it? Mr. Bowie didn't know.

This was on November 27. On December 8, the New York *Journal American* published a "step by stealthy step" account of the assassination in the form of a copyrighted story by Gene Roberts originally published in the Detroit *Free Press* and then syndicated to various other newspapers across the country. Somewhere in the middle of that story, the following lines appeared:

"The storage room seemed made to order for

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an assassin. It was cluttered with rows of book cartons, some of them in stacks six feet high. Five depository employees had worked in the storage room until noon, covering its floor with plywood. One of them, Bonnie Ray Williams, walked near the window at the 10 o'clock smoking break, downed a bottle of pop, chewed on a piece of chicken. This killed the theory that the assassin had eaten while waiting in ambush."

This was the first I (or anyone else, I believe) had heard of Bonnie Ray Williams and the four other men who were working in the sixth-floor storage room until noon on the morning of the assassination. Neither Jack C. Cason, president of the Texas School Book Depository, nor Roy S. Truly, its manager, had ever mentioned them. On the day of the murder, indeed, Mr. Cason was quoted by the Dallas *Morning News* as saying that "President Kennedy's killer could have been holed up in that sixth story hideaway for as long as four days without anyone bothering him." Nevertheless, Mr. Truly has since confirmed Gene Roberts's modestly hidden scoop. "Maybe I left out a few things, talking to reporters," he remarked when I reminded him on the phone that he had never spoken of the workmen before. "Yes, I may have forgotten about it, there were so many things to think of, and everybody was so upset."

Well, maybe. But how is it that the police found Oswald's palm print, but no other, on a carton which, it now develops, must have been shifted back and forth during the morning by several different hands? And since it now also appears that Oswald could not, because of the exceptional activity going on there all morning, have used the convenient hiding places of the sixth floor, where did he keep his rifle from sight until noon? When did he take it out from where he had hidden it? How did he get it to the sixth-floor window in time for the murder without being seen?

Moreover, if Gene Roberts's story represents—as it seems to do—the present position of the Dallas authorities, one wonders how Bonnie Ray Williams convinced Assistant District Attorney Bowie that at the 10 o'clock smoking break on November 22, he was chewing chicken bones which, according to what Mr. Bowie himself told me, were already a day old.

4. The Italian Rifle

The rifle which killed President Kennedy, as all the world has been told, was a Mannlicher-Carcano 1938. As is well known by now, European experts—including technicians of the Beretta Company which manufactured it and Italian army instructors who used it during World War II—say that this type of rifle does not lend itself to three accurate shots within five or six seconds. Other experts—in Sweden and the United States—disagree. But practically every expert who thinks it possible for such a rifle to achieve so high a degree of rapid-fire accuracy also says that it would require a crack shot, one who was intimate with the weapon and was practicing on it constantly.

The first reaction of the Dallas authorities in the face of the onslaught by the European experts was to argue that Oswald actually had had much more than five or six seconds to fire the three shots. That was what Jim Bowie told me personally, and what Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker stated publicly: "Oswald had plenty of time, maybe twenty seconds . . ."

On November 27, Dr. Kemp Clark, one of the doctors who operated on the President at Portland Hospital, declared that the first bullet seemed to have hit Mr. Kennedy "just below the Adam's apple, at about the necktie knot." This information was immediately seized upon by the authorities as supporting Sheriff Decker's estimate of the time it must have taken to fire the three shots. The President, the press was now instructed, was hit the first time while his car was still on Houston Street, slowing down to make the sharp turn at Elm Street toward the underpass and Stemmons Freeway. The assassin then swung his rifle around in a ninety-degree arc, and following the car in his telescopic sight, caught up with it again from the back, well after the turn. Thus, according to this theory—which the wire services rushed to skeptical experts in Italy and Austria—the assassin had at least ten to fifteen seconds between the first and second shots.

The same evening, however, speaking for the first time from his hospital bed, Governor John Connally, who had been hit by the assassin's second bullet, told a very different story. Here are his exact words, as taken from the broadcast recorded by the New York *Times*: "We had just turned the corner. We heard a shot. I turned to my left. I was sitting in the jump seat. I turned to my left and looked in the back seat. The President had slumped. He had said nothing. Almost simultaneously as I turned, I was hit, and I knew I'd been hit badly, and I said—I knew the President had been hit—and I said, 'My God, they're going to kill us all.' And then there was a third shot, and the President was hit again . . ."

In other words, the first shot was fired *after* the corner had been turned, and the second followed "almost simultaneously." And if this were not enough to dispose of the twenty-second theory of the Dallas authorities, it collapsed completely when the motion picture film taken by a local amateur showed that the Presidential car was already on Elm Street, past the Texas School Book Depository, when the shooting started. Taking into account the speed of the film and the speed of the car (determined by several reconstructions of the fatal trip), the Dallas authorities finally arrived at what is today the official conclu-

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sion: the three shots were fired in five-and-a-half seconds.

But just as these same authorities, by trying too hard to place Oswald in the Elm Street building immediately after the assassination, came close to providing him with an alibi, so they now raised new difficulties for themselves.

On the day of the assassination, Dr. Kemp Clark and some of the other doctors who attended the President at Parkland Hospital had expressed a certain perplexity over the wound below the Adam's apple. They weren't sure, they said, whether this wound had been caused by the same bullet as the wound in the back of the President's head or by a different one. Dr. Clark personally explained to newsmen how the throat wound might be interpreted as the exit mark of the bullet which had penetrated the President's head from behind. Five days later, however, Dr. Clark decided that the throat wound was an entry mark. This interpretation supported the theory of the Dallas authorities that the first shot had hit Mr. Kennedy on Houston Street, and thus eased the problem of the Italian rifle. But it also left the Dallas authorities in an awkward predicament. "How," asked Richard Dudman in the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* on December 1, "could the President have been shot in the front from the back?"

Once more the answer came in the form of one of those leaks which a foreign correspondent working in this country quickly learns from his American colleagues are to be regarded as practically official, though no authority will either confirm or deny them. This time the wire services identified the authority in question as "a source fully acquainted with results of a post-mortem examination conducted at the Bethesda, Maryland, Naval Hospital."

According to this unofficial-official report, the first bullet had actually struck the President in the back, penetrating two or three inches without damaging any vital organs. The reason this wound had not been discovered at Parkland Hospital was that the doctors there were busy trying to save the President's life and that meant attending first to the head and throat wounds. These two wounds, the unofficial-official report now stated, confirming Dr. Clark's initial hypothesis, had been caused by a single bullet which had entered through the back of the head and exited below the Adam's apple.

This took care of Richard Dudman's question. But the autopsy report provided yet another confirmation of the shortness of time in which the three shots were fired, and so the Dallas authorities still had to explain how a man like Oswald could have fired three so accurate shots in such record time with the Mannlicher-Carcano 1938 found near the sixth-floor window of the Elm Street building. Lee Oswald was considered a good shot during his service with the Marines, but far from a champion, and even a champion, everybody agreed, would have to practice regularly to do as well as President Kennedy's assassin did. Consequently, since Oswald received the Italian rifle on March 20, if it could not be proved that he had been practicing assiduously from then until shortly before November 22, it would really be difficult to make the case against him convincing. For how could a man whose Marine training went back four years nevertheless hit a moving target three times in five-and-a-half seconds, shooting at an angle of 45 degrees with a second-hand bolt-action rifle, without intensive practice? Yet for two weeks after the murder that was precisely what we were asked to believe—until December 6, when the Dallas *Morning News* reported that the police had found witnesses who had seen Oswald practicing with the Italian rifle on a nearby gun range. The range was quickly identified as the Grand Prairie Sportsdrome. The owner, a Mr. Floyd Davis, told reporters that he himself had seen nothing, but that four of his customers had noticed, and mentioned to him, a strange fellow who during the two weekends preceding the assassination had attracted their attention both by his expert handling of a foreign-type gun equipped with a telescopic sight, and by his irritating lack of manners in shooting crossfire at other people's targets. They had recognized this fellow as Lee Oswald when they saw him on television, Mr. Davis said, but they hadn't reported the information earlier to the police or the FBI because it hadn't occurred to them that the investigators would be interested.

Now, apart from the fact that Oswald spent his weekends with his wife and children in Mrs. Paine's four-room house in Irving and would therefore have had difficulty in getting away to the rifle range unobserved and carrying a gun, the credibility of the witnesses who have declared that they saw him is called into question by their having also seen him arrive at the wheel of a car. Oswald did not own a car, and according to Mrs. Paine, who tried vainly to teach him, neither did he know how to drive.

5. Bullets, Ballistics, and the Irving Gunsmith

Very pertinent questions have been asked—and very dubious conclusions drawn—in the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* and the *New Republic* about the number of bullets used by the assassin.

He is supposed to have fired three shots, yet anyone who looks carefully at all the statements made by various officials on the case will find that those three shots seem to have produced four bullets. The confusion is due to the mystery that for several weeks surrounded the bullet which struck Governor Connally. I have seen or heard four different reports on it, two of which say that the bullet "pierced" the Governor's thigh and two that it "lodged" in it. Choosing the latter version—and with good reason, since it was the one given

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by Dr. Robert Shaw, Governor Connally's personal physician, on the day after the shooting—Richard Dudman in the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* followed by Jack Minnis and Staughton Lynd in the *New Republic,* counted four bullets: one in President Kennedy's back, one found on a stretcher, one in fragments on the floor of the car, and one in Governor Connally's thigh.

In order to find out for myself, I called the Executive Mansion in Austin and got Julian Read, one of the Governor's aides, on the phone. Had the bullet "pierced" Mr. Connally's thigh or "lodged" in it, I asked Mr. Read? Or was the answer to this question considered a state secret? "No, there is no secret," he replied. "Please hold on just a moment." I held on, and a minute later he came back with a straight answer: "The bullet had splintered, and a fragment embedded itself in the thigh where it was recovered."

This settled the mystery of the four bullets but did nothing to settle another equally perplexing one. Both Chief Curry and FBI Agent Shanklin had said that ballistics tests made in the FBI's Washington laboratories proved that *all three* bullets had been fired from "Oswald's gun." Yet how could this be when one of the bullets was splintered and when experts from all over the world—including Söderman and the late Chief Inspector of the New York Police Department John J. O'Connell—have made it clear that ballistic identification with the help of the comparison microscope is possible only "if the bullet has retained its shape or is only partly deformed"?

HERE too I tried to check at the source, but I was less lucky with the Justice Department and the FBI in Washington, D.C., than I had been with the Executive Mansion in Austin, Texas. A Public Information Officer at the Justice Department told me, after asking me to hold on, that all available information had been transmitted to the Warren Commission, that this included all reports on ballistics and other laboratory tests, and that nothing had been or could now be released by the Justice Department to the press. When I asked him whether I was to understand that all the statements which had been made in Dallas were without foundation, he quickly denied that this was what he had meant, and suggesting that I use my own judgment, he gave me the number of an FBI Public Information Officer who, he said, might be able to tell me something more.

The Public Information Officer at the FBI was expecting my call. He told me that all available information had been transmitted . . . etc. So far as the ballistics tests were concerned, they had been done at the request of the Dallas authorities and the results had therefore been communicated to them. What the Dallas authorities then did with the report or said about it was not the responsibility of the FBI. No, he could neither confirm or deny anything—that would be contrary to FBI policy. Yes, I would have to use my own judgment.

Well, using my own judgment as twice suggested, I would say that the Dallas authorities could not have received positive ballistic identification of the fragmented bullet from the FBI, but that they gave the impression they had in order to make a better case against Oswald. Of course, if the FBI could identify only two out of three bullets as having been fired by the Mannlicher-Carcano found in the Elm Street building, it would not mean that the third one was necessarily fired by another gun, especially since this fragmented bullet was the one that hit Governor Connally. In contrast to the questions raised by Mr. Kennedy's throat wound, there has never been any controversy about the direction of the bullet that struck Mr. Connally. Indeed, the trajectory of the bullet through his body makes it the only one of the three which can be clearly traced back, if not to the rifle, at least to the sixth-floor window of the School Book Depository. Nevertheless, given the fact that part of what we were told about the ballistics tests was untrue, how can we be sure about the rest of it?

For that matter, how can we be sure about anything in this incredible investigation, when one of the strangest episodes in the story still remains to be cleared up? This episode involves an Irving gunsmith, Mr. Dial D. Ryder, who declared on November 28 that about a month earlier he had mounted a telescopic sight on a rifle for a customer named Oswald. Mr. Ryder remembered neither the man nor the weapon, but he had found a repair ticket—$4.50 for drilling and $1.50 for boresighting—with the name Oswald on it. The story made headlines, but soon someone remembered that the Italian rifle Oswald had received from a Chicago mail-order firm was supposed to have had a telescopic sight already mounted on it, and the Dallas officials who had given the big news to the reporters told them a few hours later to forget about it—it was just a mistake. Indeed it was a mistake, for once again the brilliant Dallas investigators had inadvertently stirred up inconvenient problems.

From the very beginning there had been some question about the rifle with the telescopic sight because of the price Oswald was said to have paid for it. Every newspaper in the world had already dozens of times mentioned the $12.78 second-hand rifle used to kill John F. Kennedy, when a reproduction in the New York *Times* of the Klein's Sporting Goods ad showed that $12.78 was the price of the "6.5 Italian Carbine" *without* telescopic sight, (item No. C20-1196). The same rifle "with brand new 4 Xscope" was listed as costing $19.95 (item No. C-20-750). Besides, Oswald would also have had to buy item No. E20-751 ("6.5mm. Italian military ammo, 108 rds") which, together with a free 6-shot clip, amounted to another $7.50. Captain Fritz, in answer to ques-

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tions, said that the announcement of the price as $12.78 had been an error, and that Oswald had received the gun "fully equipped, you bet." Mr. Milton P. Klein, President of Klein's Sporting Goods in Chicago, confirmed that the rifle sent to Oswald's P.O. Box in Dallas under the name of A. Hidell was the $19.95 item with telescopic sight. Mr. Klein did not mention the ammo. Neither did Captain Fritz, and it may be noted here, as another curious detail of the case, that while the search conducted in Irving as well as in the North Beckley Avenue rooming house in Dallas produced a great number of letters, photographs, and other documents, not a single 6.5mm. bullet was ever announced as having turned up.

Under all these circumstances, the story of the Irving gunsmith was apt to reopen the whole question of the weapon, and there must have been a difficult moment that evening in Dallas Police Headquarters when this was realized. At first, some journalists were told that Oswald may have owned a second rifle, but this was not a very convenient way out either, because it meant that the police would have had to explain where he had kept it and where he had bought the other telescopic sight. And so the story of the Irving gunsmith was dismissed as a misunderstanding and he was never mentioned again.

There remains, however, something extremely disturbing about this episode which no serious investigation can ignore. Unlike other witnesses, Mr. Ryder did not say that he recognized or remembered Oswald, but only that he had come across a repair ticket with Oswald's name on it in his records. Now, Oswald is not Smith, Jones, or Brown. If Mr. Ryder's Oswald was not Lee Harvey, and if there was some other Oswald in Irving or nearby in October 1963, the police should find and produce him. If they cannot, and if it develops that someone who was neither Lee Harvey nor any real Oswald used the name of Oswald to get a telescopic sight mounted on a rifle by a gunsmith in Irving one month before the assassination of President Kennedy, a startling possibility would present itself—the possibility that clues leading to Lee Harvey Oswald were planted well in advance of the assassination.

But what if Mr. Ryder had misread the name on the repair ticket? This would have been a valid reason, the only valid one, for the police to have dropped the whole story. To check on this possibility, I called him and asked what exactly was the "mistake" or "misunderstanding" that had led Dallas officials to dismiss his story. "Well," he said, "you know that the gun Oswald received from Chicago already had a telescopic sight. So it couldn't be the murder gun he brought to me. It must've been another gun, or it was some other Oswald." But was he sure of the name on the repair ticket? Had he perhaps misread it? "No, no, the ticket is still here. It's Oswald. No first name or middle initial, but Oswald. Just Oswald."

6. Prints, Witnesses, and the Invisible .38

There is a fascinating passage—yet another—in the transcript of District Attorney Wade's Sunday night press conference. This one concerns the question of prints on Oswald's Italian rifle:

"Q. What other evidence is there? A. Let's see . . . His fingerprints were found on the gun, have I said that? Q. Which gun? A. On the rifle. Q. You didn't say that. (. . .) Q. The rifle fingerprints were his, were Oswald's? A. Yes. . . . Q. Were there any fingerprints . . .? A. Palm prints rather than fingerprints. Q. Were there any fingerprints at the window? Q. Palm prints on the what? A. Yes, on . . . Q. On the rifle? A. Yes, sir. Q. Where are they on the rifle? A. Under—on part of the metal —under the gun . . ."

In other words, there were no fingerprints. But why weren't there? If the Mannlicher-Carcano belonged to Oswald, one would expect his fingerprints to be on it, whether he killed the President or not. But if he *did* kill the President with this rifle, the absence of his fingerprints seems strange. Did he wear gloves? Not if we are to believe the District Attorney's statement that there was a palm print "on part of the metal—under the gun." Did he, then, before hiding the rifle behind some cartons and crates on the sixth floor, carefully wipe the weapon clean with his handkerchief, though forgetting to wipe the metal under the gun? This is possible, but it would be curious that Oswald should have taken just this one precaution while neglecting all others to the point of carrying an identification card with the name A. Hidell on it in his wallet. Besides, if we assume that Oswald wiped the weapon we have to add a number of seconds to the time it would have taken him to get down to the second-floor lunchroom—and this would enhance his alibi.

If someone else killed the President, of course, he would certainly have had the greatest interest in wiping the weapon clean, even if this meant destroying old fingerprints of Oswald's. In any case, the absence of Oswald's fingerprints on the rifle is by no means the only curious detail involving guns in this case. There is also the .38 revolver which, according to the Dallas authorities, Oswald used to kill Officer Tippit and with which he later tried to kill Officer MacDonald in the movie theater. While many things, true and false, have been said about the Italian rifle, no evidence whatever connected with the .38 has ever been given to the press. If the official investigators have tried to trace its origins, they have told us nothing about the results of their efforts. Nor have they ever established it as a fact that Oswald carried a revolver, or even owned one. It is true that on Tuesday evening, November 26, Captain Fritz suddenly "revealed" to newsmen waiting for him as usual on the third floor of Dallas Police Headquarters, that Oswald had confessed to ownership of the .38. This confession had never been

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mentioned before, not even by District Attorney Wade (whose press conference was held on the evening of Oswald's death), and like several other "revelations" in the case, it was soon to drop out of mention again—presumably because the Dallas authorities realized that the world would be reluctant to accept Captain Fritz's belated word for a confession Oswald allegedly made during the two days of his interrogation by the police without benefit of counsel.

Given the combination of daze and ballyhoo that characterized the period immediately following the assassination, an atmosphere of credulity was created in which it was difficult for most people to be critical. Thus, for example, dozens of newspapermen reported, simply because Chief Curry or Captain Fritz had said so, that Oswald, after leaving the School Book Depository, rushed to his room on North Beckley to pick up a jacket and his revolver. The housekeeper, Mrs. Earlene Roberts, did indeed see him take the jacket, but she saw no revolver. (She had, by the way, never noticed a revolver or a holster in his room, though the police claim to have found an empty holster there when they first searched the premises on Friday afternoon.) Oswald is then supposed to have shot Officer Tippit when stopped by the latter—who was cruising alone in his car (and for unexplained reasons, outside his normal beat) some three miles from the place of President Kennedy's assassination. Could Tippit have recognized Oswald on the basis of a very vague description which, moreover, would not have mentioned the tan zipper jacket he had put on since leaving Elm Street? It seems unlikely, and yet when Donald Janson summed up "The Dallas Mystery" in the "News of the Week in Review" section of the New York *Times* on Sunday, December 1, he wrote without hesitation: "He [Oswald] killed the policeman, another mass of evidence shows . . ."

What mass of evidence? The police claimed they had three eyewitnesses to the shooting. Newsmen got hold of one of them, a Mrs. Markham, who described the man she saw shooting Tippit as "about 30, with bushy hair and a white coat." Oswald, we know, was not yet 24, had rather thin hair, and was wearing a tan zipper jacket. The police also named a Mrs. Davis, who said that she saw a man ejecting some shells from a gun while crossing her yard a short distance away from the murder, but she wasn't able to describe him. In his Sunday night press conference, District Attorney Wade had said: "Witnesses saw him [Oswald] eject the shells from a revolver and place—reload—the gun." Whoever told the police that he or she saw Oswald reload did them something of a disservice, for this testimony contradicts Captain Fritz, who, having thought at first that Officer Tippit had been killed by two bullets, took care to emphasize to newsmen on Friday afternoon that there had been precisely two empty chambers in the .38 taken from Oswald at the Texas Theater.

But can we at least consider it as an established fact that Oswald, whom neither Mrs. Markham nor Mrs. Davis could identify, had a revolver on him, with or without empty chambers, when he was arrested in the cinema? The policemen who made the arrest say that he did, though a jury might well be perplexed by the different accounts we have been given of how Oswald used the gun. Here again is Mr. Wade:

"Someone saw him [Oswald] go in the Texas Theater. A search was made of that later by a number of police officers. At the same time an officer of the Dallas police spotted him and asked him to come out. He struck at the officer, put the gun against his head and snapped it, but did not—the bullet did not—go off. We have the snapped bullet here. Officers apprehended him at this time. (. . .) Q. Do you know why the gun . . . Q. Which officer? A. MacDonald was his name. Q. Why didn't it go off? A. It snapped. It was a misfire. Then officers subdued him—some six officers subdued him there in the theater, and he was brought to the police station here. Q. Mr. Wade, why didn't the gun fire? A. It misfired, being on the—shell didn't explode. We have where it hit it, but it didn't explode. It didn't fire the shell. Q. There was one officer who said that he pulled the trigger, but he managed to put his thumb in the part before the firing pin. It didn't . . . A. Well . . . Q. Strike the—bullet didn't explode. Is that . . . A. I don't know whether it's that or not. I know he didn't snap the gun is all I know about it. Q. You would say it was a misfire? A. It didn't fire. Q. Let's get the story again . . ."

The tenacious reporter did not get the story again, which may be just as well because it is hard to imagine how such a story could have been made clearer by the District Attorney. What could bring clarity, however, is the testimony of other witnesses, not connected with the Dallas Police Department. According to the cashier of the Texas Theater, there were perhaps twenty people in the audience when the police entered, and—as we have also been told—they switched on the lights. Thus some twenty people, instead of watching a movie called *War Is Hell,* watched the arrest of a man whom they were later told was the assassin of President Kennedy. How is it that not a single one of these people has come forward, or been brought forward to give an impartial eyewitness account of the arrest? Since the arresting officers contradicted each other on what Oswald did with his gun, or on what they did with Oswald's gun, should not any serious investigation have made an effort to get the facts straight by questioning the witnesses who happened to be present?

Yet no witnesses have been brought forward to testify that Oswald was carrying a gun when he

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was arrested. What is even more disturbing, no witnesses have come forward on their own to testify to the gun. For it is hard to imagine that some, at least, of the twenty moviegoers who had just had the adventure of their lives would not rush forward to tell the story of how Lee Harvey Oswald tried to shoot his way out of the theater. It is, however, possible to imagine that some of these twenty residents of the Oak Cliff section of Dallas, having seen no revolver in the hands of Oswald, might hesitate to stick their necks out by contradicting the police.

7. The Crosses on the Map

On Saturday evening, November 23, Chief Curry informed the world that on that very morning his men had discovered some "entirely new facts" which constituted "startling evidence" against Oswald. He refused to give any more details except to add in answer to a reporter's question that these new facts "did not pertain to the rifle." The next night, when District Attorney Wade (who had said he was "going through the evidence piece by piece") seemed to have reached the end of his press conference without mentioning Chief Curry's "startling" new discovery, a reporter asked him about it. "I don't know," Mr. Wade replied. "That wasn't me that said that, I don't think . . ."

A few hours later, the early city edition of the Dallas *Morning News* disclosed this "startling evidence," and on Monday morning, Mr. Wade, whom reporters had been unable to reach during the night, was ready to confirm its existence. Though he hadn't personally seen it, he said, the police had found in Oswald's room on North Beckley Avenue a Dallas city map with a line drawn on it tracing the trajectory of the bullets that hit the President on Elm Street. In addition to the Elm-Houston corner, two other locations of the parade route were marked by crosses, "apparently locations the assassin considered as possibilities."

My own first reaction to this disclosure was to wonder how even the maddest of assassins could leave such a document in his room—unless (unlike Oswald) he intended to boast about his act and did not mind dying for it. The second reaction was to wonder how even the most incompetent of policemen could have missed such a document when first searching the five-by-twelve foot room on Friday afternoon. It subsequently appeared, however, that the police hadn't missed the map (which Mrs. Paine later testified she had given to Oswald to help him when he was looking for a job) on their first search. According to the Friday evening edition of the Dallas *Morning News*, "FBI and Secret Service men grabbed up his [Oswald's] few belongings before the press arrived, but Mrs. Roberts [the housekeeper] said one thing she noticed was a map of Dallas."

Where was the map kept overnight? An interesting point, certainly, to be brought out by future official investigators. Meanwhile, we have Chief Curry's Saturday evening statement, from which we can conclude (in spite of the Dallas *Morning News* which mentions only "FBI and Secret Service men") that the map was kept at Dallas Police Headquarters.

Now, if the map was already marked when it was taken out of Oswald's room on Friday, why should this particular piece of news have been treated so uniquely as to have been kept secret until Saturday? In the second place, the possibility that someone got hold of the map between Friday evening and Saturday morning, shocking though it is, cannot be discounted when we consider the state of Dallas Police Headquarters on Friday and Saturday. Reporters—especially foreign correspondents—have told with retrospective amazement that they could go practically anywhere, sit on tables, use the phones, open drawers to look for a pencil or a piece of paper. No passes were checked, and all doors were opened at the mere sight of a camera, or even an extension cord wrapped around one's shoulder.

Furthermore, if the Dallas conception of legal decorum differs from that which prevails in most other places, so too is its conception of how evidence should be protected. Take, for example, the most important of all the exhibits in this case: the rifle. This precious piece of evidence was held up to the television cameras by a bare-handed Dallas detective in the third-floor corridor of Dallas Police Headquarters, *before* it was sent to Washington to be scientifically examined in the laboratories of the FBI. And then, in Saturday morning's newspapers, there was a photograph showing how this same piece of evidence—which was to be checked in Washington for marks, spots, prints, and traces—was carried outside, without any protective wrapping over it, by another Dallas detective who held it by its strap while the butt rubbed against his trousers.

Thus, there is nothing wildly improbable in the idea that someone might have got hold of the map, between Friday afternoon and Saturday morning (when, as Chief Curry announced, his men first discovered it). The idea, indeed, that *Oswald* made these marks seems rather more improbable. Why should he have done so? At first it was thought that Oswald had studied various possible locations for the assassination before choosing the Elm Street building—a theory to which credibility was lent by the fact that the President's visit to Dallas had already been anounced (on September 26 in the Dallas *Morning News*) by the time Oswald took his job with the School Depository. This theory, however, collapsed when it was learned that Oswald got the job through no initiative of his own: an Irving neighbor mentioned to Mrs. Paine that there was an opening at the Texas School Book Depository,

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and Mrs. Paine then informed Oswald and recommended him to Mr. Truly. Consequently, if Oswald was the assassin, he must have conceived the crime only after starting work on Elm Street (let us even say that the very location of the building offered a temptation to his unbalanced mind). If this is so, we can imagine him drawing a line on a map tracing the trajectory of the bullets he intended to fire from a window of the Depository. But what reason could he possibly have had to mark any other point on the map?

8. Questions And Questions

I have listed here some of the questions suggested by the manner in which President Kennedy's assassination has so far been investigated, and by the way Lee Harvey Oswald was convicted of the crime by the Dallas Police Department before being executed in the basement of its headquarters.

Many people, finding it hard to believe that the executioner, Jack Ruby, was acting out of an "irresistible patriotic impulse" when he shot Oswald, think that there must have been a link between the two men. Why? Why should Jack Ruby have needed to know Oswald in order to kill him? If he was acting on behalf of someone, all he needed to know was where to find his man and how to get him. Besides, the arguments that have been constructed to support the idea of an Oswald-Ruby team are rather childish. A mountain has been made, for instance, of the fact that the spot at which Oswald is supposed to have killed Officer Tippit was about halfway—almost a mile—between Oswald's room and Ruby's apartment. But this, of course, proves nothing: thousands of people live within a radius of a mile from that point. Nor can we attribute any significance to the night Oswald spent at the YMCA after his return from Mexico, just because a strip-teaser at Ruby's club has said that Ruby sometimes went to the gym there. Several reporters even thought they had made a startling discovery of their own when they noticed that windows of the advertising department of the Dallas *Morning News* (where Ruby was busy Friday at noontime revising an ad for his strip-tease joint when he should have been in the street expressing his devotion to John and Jacqueline Kennedy) command a perfect view of the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. But what is that supposed to mean? That Ruby was sending signals to Oswald?

I believe that the most important consequence of Oswald's death was not to close his mouth but to close his trial. For if Lee Harvey Oswald had ever had his day in court, with a good defense lawyer answering District Attorney Wade, cross-examining the Dallas police officers, and raking their witnesses over the coals, what might not have emerged?

Here is a last sample of Mr. Wade's press conference: "The next we hear of him is on a bus where he got on at Lamar Street, told the bus driver the President had been shot, the President. [He] told the lady—all this was verified by statements—told the lady on the bus that the President had been shot. He said, 'How did he know?' He said a man back there told him. The defendant said, 'Yes, he's been shot,' and laughed very loud. Q. This was a lady? A. A lady. He then . . . asked the bus driver to stop, got off at a stop, caught a taxicab driver, Darryl Click . . ."

Reporters have checked this story (only 21 lines in the transcript). The actual facts (which neither Mr. Wade nor the witnesses he quoted have contested) are these:

(1) Oswald took the bus at Griffin Street, not Lamar Street. (2) He said nothing to the bus driver, C. J. McWatters, nor to any lady on the bus. (3) The driver learned about the assassination from an unknown man in the street when the bus ran into a traffic jam. (4) Oswald did not laugh, "very loud" or otherwise. (5) He got off the bus at the traffic jam, as did another person, asking McWatters for a transfer. (6) The driver of the cab he then caught was Bill Whaley, not Darryl Click.

Indeed: if Lee Harvey Oswald had ever had his day in court with a good defense lawyer answering District Attorney Wade, what might not have emerged?

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Peace in Our Time?

HANS J. MORGENTHAU

That the cold war should come to an end is indeed a rational wish shared by the overwhelming majority of people on both sides of the Iron Curtain. This wish is particularly strong among us whose instincts still long for the normalcy of isolation from the risks and liabilities of world politics and who find ourselves engaged in a contest for the world only (so we like to think) through the ill will of the enemy. If the Russians would only change, if they would only liberalize their domestic affairs and be less harsh in the conduct of their foreign policy (so the reasoning goes), we could "normalize" our relations with the Communist bloc, disarm, and live happily ever after. Thus we continuously search for the swallow which will make a summer, and whenever we feel a little less cold than we did yesterday we imagine a "thaw" in the cold war.

The emotions from which such expectations spring are honorable and generous, but they are politically blind, and pernicious if translated into action. And it makes no difference whether they manifest themselves as euphoric statements by high government officials, as involuted theories about polycentrism by former diplomats, as indiscriminate trading with the enemy by businessmen, or as the longing of the man in the street for peace and quiet and lower taxes.

Paradoxically enough, these manifestations of a decent aspiration for peace are actually a threat to peace; for they are a source of weakness in judgment and action, and hence they encourage and strengthen the enemy. Of decent emotion engendering futile and self-defeating policies, Neville Chamberlain has become the historic symbol. We pride ourselves on having learned the lessons of Chamberlain's appeasement. But in truth we have only learned half the lesson. On the one hand, equating negotiations with appeasement, we have shied away from negotiated settlements even when there was a chance for them, as in 1953 after Stalin's death. On the other hand, we have yielded to pressure where the enemy was, or gave the appearance of being, strong—e.g., Hungary in 1956 and Cuba in 1962—and we have foregone the opportunity of offering inducements and exerting pressure when the enemy was weak, as he is at present. We have, moreover, been unable to shed the illusion that civilized social intercourse among nations whose interests clash is somehow conducive to peace, and that the cold war could easily be ended if the antagonists would only treat each other in a more friendly and reasonable fashion. These attitudes and the policies springing from them have not brought peace but only a fleeting illusion of peace, for they leave the conflicts of interest from which the cold war arose and on which it has fed exactly as they found them.

The next to the latest euphoric interval occurred in 1959 in the aftermath of Mr. Khrushchev's visit to the United States; its symbol was the "spirit of Camp David." At that time I assumed in this magazine* the thankless task of contrasting the illusory character of that "relaxation of tensions" with the inescapable realities of the cold war. Today we are living in another such interval, and the thankless task must be performed again. It is, indeed, even more urgent today than it was in 1959 because then our illusion was primarily intellectual and had no great political consequences, whereas today that same illusion is reflected in policies advantageous to the enemy. Responsible people are even talking about "replacing" the cold war with the war against poverty, as though the cold war had already come to an end.

In order to see our present condition in its true perspective, it is necessary to remind ourselves again of the origin and the nature of the cold war. The cold war arose in the aftermath of the Second World War from a conflict of interests, operating on two different levels, between the Western world and the Soviet Union. On the level of traditional power politics, that conflict has centered upon the control of Europe and, in particular, Germany. On the level of competing philosophies and social and political systems, the issue is the control of the world. The substance of these two great issues has remained constant for almost two decades. Only their modalities have been transformed, in that all-out nuclear war has been ruled out as a rational instrument of national policy and the struggle for the world is being waged primarily through political and economic competition and through what Mr. Khrush-

*"Khrushchev's New Cold War Strategy." November 1959.

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chev calls "wars of national liberation." Has anything happened to affect this picture in any material way?

Secretary of State Dean Rusk, in his press conference of January 2, 1964, answered that question by enumerating five changes which in his view have contributed to the improvement of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union: the establishment of a "hot-line" teletype link between Washington and Moscow; the limited nuclear test-ban treaty; the United Nations resolution prohibiting weapons of mass destruction in orbit; negotiations for wheat purchases between the Soviet Union and the United States; the suspension by the Soviet Union of its jamming of the Voice of America. It is hardly necessary to demonstrate in detail that the Secretary of State has, by implication, given a negative answer to our question. None of these five changes has any bearing upon the substance of the cold war, while only one of them bears upon its modalities, and in a way that is detrimental to the interests of the United States.

The "hot line" facilitates communications between Washington and Moscow, but obviously the all-important question as to the kind of communications to be transmitted is not answered one way or the other by the installation of this politically neutral device. The limited test-ban treaty transforms into a temporary multilateral obligation the technological necessity, which had previously been observed by the nuclear powers unilaterally, to stop testing for a considerable period of time after the completion of a series of tests. The United Nations resolution prohibiting weapons of mass destruction in orbit is a recommendation which the United States and the Soviet Union have been able to accept because they are at present incapable of doing what the recommendation asks them not to do (though both nations are engaged in research exploring the usefulness of outer space for purposes of war). The sale of wheat—as we shall see in greater detail in a moment—helps the Soviet Union to wage the cold war, but does nothing to liquidate it. Finally, the decision to cease jamming is a peripheral measure which may be due to any number of technical or political reasons but does not affect the substance of the cold war.

While the issues over which the cold war started, then, still divide the United States and the Soviet Union today, three interrelated changes have occurred in recent years which add up to a drastic deterioration of the position of the Soviet Union: the conflict with China, the weakening of control over its allies, and an economic crisis of the first order.

The issue dividing the Soviet Union and China is in the short run the leadership of world Communism; in the long run it is the same issue that currently divides the United States and the Soviet Union: who shall inherit the earth? On the one hand, the Soviet Union has been able to stifle the economic development of China by severing economic relations. On the other hand, in the dispute as to who is the true exponent of Marxism-Leninism, the Chinese—both objectively and in the eyes of many Communists, especially outside the developed industrial nations—have had the better of the argument. Indeed, Khrushchev and Togliatti are today defending the positions which Bernstein and Kautsky held fifty years ago, while Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai are advancing the arguments which Lenin and Trotsky formulated then.

This conflict between the Soviet Union and China has weakened the control of the Soviet Union over its allies, for it provides the allies with an alternative to the Soviet connection. And while only Albania has openly defied the Soviet Union and taken the side of China, by being able to do so with impunity it has set an example for the other allies of the Soviet Union. Thus Cuba has refused to sign the test-ban treaty; Rumania has defied the Soviet Union in its plans for a division of economic labor within the Communist bloc which would have inhibited Rumanian industrial development; and Poland has, however cautiously, tried to play the Chinese off against the Russians in order to gain a greater measure of national independence.

Finally, and most importantly, the crisis of agricultural production, endemic in all Communist countries, has become acute in the Soviet Union. The Soviet economic system has proved incapable of providing "guns and butter" plus consumer goods at the same time, and is in consequence undergoing a drastic reallocation of resources. This economic crisis is bound to impose severe limitations upon the Soviet Union's ability to keep pace with the United States in the armaments race and to make political use of its economic resources through the instruments of foreign aid and trade.

One does not need to be an expert in foreign policy in order to notice that this triple crisis in which the Soviet Union finds itself today opens up new and unprecedented opportunities for Western initiative. Common sense will tell us that, given the relativity of power, the weakness of our enemy is a source of strength for us—provided we know how to use that weakness to further our own interests. This is not the place to spell out these opportunities; nor is it possible for the outsider to analyze such opportunities in detail. It is sufficient for the purposes of this discussion to state the general principle which ought to guide our policies, and to judge the policies we are actually pursuing in the light of that principle.

There is only one lesson nations will readily learn, and that is the lesson of necessity. This is particularly true of a nation like the Soviet Union, which combines the traditional objectives of a

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great imperial power with the world-wide aspirations of the leader of a revolutionary movement. Nations will stop when they realize that to advance entails risks greater than the benefits to be expected, and they will retreat when they realize that the advantages to be gained from retreat outweigh those to be expected from standing pat. The art of diplomacy consists in presenting the enemy with inducements, in the form of advantages and liabilities, for doing what one wants him to do.

APPLYING THIS principle to the present stage of the cold war, one would think that the West is in an excellent bargaining position *vis-a-vis* the Soviet Union. It has for sale what the Soviet Union desperately needs—agricultural products and industrial machinery—and it could use that need as a diplomatic lever to gain concessions concerning the Soviet Union's control over Eastern Europe and, more particularly, East Germany, the Western presence in Berlin, the Soviet military presence in Cuba, its subversive activities throughout the world (especially through the instrumentality of Cuba), and disarmament. As I wrote in the *New York Times Magazine* on September 20, 1959:

> Yet it is exactly because trade between the United States and the Soviet Union poses an issue which is not primarily economic but political that it could be affected by a political agreement. An American concession in the form of increased trade might be a proper price for a Russian guarantee of the status quo in Berlin, especially since it could be enlarged, decreased, or cancelled altogether, as circumstances might require. Foreign trade is by its very nature a most flexible instrument of foreign policy and can be a most potent one, provided one side has a much greater interest in trading than the other. The use of foreign trade in the Russian manner—that is, as a political instrument rather than in an economic context—offers the United States a bargaining power of which it has not even begun to take advantage.

"Idiotic" is not too strong a term to characterize the Western response to these opportunities—"idiotic" meaning, according to Webster, "foolish; senseless." For we have welcomed the present crisis in the Communist camp as an opportunity for trade, and we are willing to sell the Communist nations everything they ask for from wheat through buses and airplanes to whole petrochemical plants.

In order to understand the folly of this commercial approach to issues of high policy, it is first necessary to point to the obsolescence of the traditional distinction between strategic and non-strategic trade. The total war Communism has been waging against the West since Lenin accounts for that obsolescence. Ideally, foreign trade is carried on by private enterprise for the purpose of private gain. Actually, however, governments have time and again endeavored to use foreign trade as an instrument of national policy. "Dollar diplomacy" is a case in point.

The leaders of the Soviet Union have consistently laid the greatest stress upon the expansion of foreign trade. They have evoked memories of Cobden and Bright, the leaders of the Manchester liberals of a century ago, as well as of our own former Secretary of State Cordell Hull, with their emphasis on what foreign trade can do for private profits and international peace. They have consistently shown a particular interest in whole industrial plants rather than manufactured goods. But the Russian leaders are not Manchester liberals. They have wanted foreign trade not for the commercial purposes our businessmen want it for, but in order to gain the political strength necessary to achieve the universal triumph of Communism. As Lenin put it: "We welcomed Genoa [the International Economic Conference at Genoa in April 1922], we understood perfectly well, and did not conceal it that we were going there as merchants because trade with capitalistic countries is absolutely essential for us (so long as they have not yet collapsed)." Khrushchev was even more explicit when he said in 1957: "We declare war upon you . . . in the peaceful field of peaceful production. We are relentless in this, and it will prove the superiority of our system." And in 1952 Stalin also voiced his confidence in the profit motive of Western businessmen as an instrument through which the Soviet Union would be made strong enough for its final triumph.

IT IS AGAINST this background of consistent Soviet attitudes and policies with regard to foreign trade and the accentuation of these attitudes and policies owing to the present critical weakness of the Soviet Union that one must judge the Russians' current lack of aggressiveness and our response to it. The supremacy of the Soviet Union in the Communist camp is seriously threatened by Chinese competition, and in order to counter this threat the Soviet Union must be able to demonstrate to the world Communist movement that its policies are more likely to have beneficial results than those advocated by China. Thus the Soviet Union must be able to point at least to a semblance of successes in its dealings with the Western world. The partial test-ban treaty, enormously oversold by Soviet propaganda, has been important for the Soviet Union primarily as such an argument against Chinese competition.

The Soviet Union is compelled by the dynamics of that competition to search for other successes, real or apparent. It might find one in the placing of stationary ground observers on both sides of the Iron Curtain in order to prevent a conventional surprise attack. Such an arrangement would be innocuous because those observers could

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observe nothing that ordinary intelligence could not detect more completely and reliably, and it would also be meaningless since no government in its senses could seriously consider a conventional surprise attack in the center of Europe. It is exactly for these reasons that such an agreement has a better chance of being concluded than others that have been discussed.

As long as the Soviet Union can hope to follow up the test-ban treaty with other agreements, it will persist in its present non-aggressive attitude. If, however, this hope should fail, the Russians would then be compelled by the very same dynamics of their competition with China to compete with the latter in revolutionary militancy. For if the Soviet Union can no longer demonstrate that its policies—in contrast to the Chinese—strengthen Communism without increasing the risks of war, it must at least show that its revolutionary militancy is second to none.

Yet this alternative is unlikely to be of much avail to the Soviet Union. For China can counter by pointing to the advantages it is reaping in spite, or by virtue, of its militancy. Do not Western businessmen compete with each other for the privilege of trading with China, just as they do with the Soviet Union? And if Chinese militancy has not opened the door to the uncommitted nations, the United Nations, and general international respectability, it certainly has done nothing to close it.

I am not arguing here against Western trade with Communist nations per se. I am only arguing in favor of the proposition that foreign trade has a different meaning for Communist nations than it has for us. Trade with Communist nations is a political act which has political consequences. It is folly to trade, or for that matter to refuse to trade, with Communist nations without concern for these political consequences. There is no reason to object to our selling a Communist country goods it needs in exchange for goods we need. There is no reason to object to trading with Communist countries like Yugoslavia, if such trade promises political results favorable to our interests. But it is a folly, comparable to that of selling scrap iron to Japan in the 30's, to stabilize the Castro regime by trading with a Cuba that is today the most important training center for Communist subversion throughout the world and to equip the Soviet Union and China with whole industrial plants and transportation systems which will then be used as weapons in the political, military, and economic offensives of Communism against the West.

That folly is compounded in the case of trade with China. The Soviet Union terminated its economic relations with China, especially in the form of aid, at the beginning of the 60's because it did not find it in its interest to supply the economic foundations for the power of a hostile China. An industrially developed China, whose population might then approach a billion, would be the most powerful nation on earth, more powerful than either the Soviet Union or the United States. It is extremely doubtful that China, in view of the numbers and poverty of its population, could find within her own borders the resources for such industrial development if she is not supplied with capital and goods from abroad. She would then remain for the foreseeable future a weak and fragile giant, a threat to her immediate neighbors but not to the two superpowers.

The Soviet Union has understood this prospect and has left China to her own economic devices. Yet with that blind and self-destructive folly which is the quality of men and nations whom fate has doomed, Western governments and businessmen are rushing into the gap left by the Russian withdrawal, replacing the Soviet Union as a source of capital and goods for China. But is China less hostile, and will she be less dangerous, to the West if and when she has become an advanced industrial nation, than she is, and will be, to the Soviet Union? Obviously, the West has at least as good reason as the Soviet Union to fear a powerful China. If it is in the interest of the Soviet Union not to help China become a modern industrial nation, it is by the very same token in the interest of the West.

Yet while the Soviet Union knows its interest and acts upon it, the West does not know it and, insofar as it does, is unable to act upon it. Marx said that the capitalists would be their own gravediggers. Western businessmen, so staunchly anti-Communist when it costs nothing, except perhaps freedom of speech for others, seem bent upon proving that Marx was right.

HANS J. MORGENTHAU's *column appears every other month. Mr. Morgenthau is Albert A. Michelson Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science and Modern History at the University of Chicago.*

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AUTEUR! AUTEUR!

MARION MAGID

SOME MONTHS AGO at the Donnell Branch of the New York Public Library, a symposium was held on the art of film criticism. Less than spellbinding for the most part, the discussion took a decided turn for the better when one of the symposiasts, in an extraordinary departure from the genial liberalism he had been espousing all evening, rose to denounce a colleague, conspicuously absent from the hall. "A Messiah he may be," thundered Dwight Macdonald in his windup, "but a film critic, never!" Whereupon one faction in the audience applauded stormily, a second broke into hoots and catcalls, and the uninitiated remained silent in presumable bewilderment. Since that evening, the feud between Dwight Macdonald and Andrew Sarris has gone on to break new ground in the creative use of epithet. In the October 1963 issue of *Esquire,* Macdonald deplored the ascent of his younger fellow-critic from obscurity to relative prominence, likening him to a "Godzilla monster . . . who had come clambering up from the primordial swamps. . . ." Sarris responded in his regular column in the (primordial) *Village Voice* by casting aspersions on Macdonald's political past, as well as on his eyesight. Whereupon Macdonald had recourse to his sometime platform in the San Francisco-Berkeley *Film Quarterly* to take vexed leave of that periodical altogether, on the ground that he found it impossible to appear under common auspices with a critic who judged Hitchcock in *The Birds* to be ". . . at the summit of his artistic powers . . ." Shifting metaphors, Macdonald now denounced Sarris as a "Greenwich Village Tsarris" issuing cinematic "ukases" rather than reasonable critical estimates. Sarris who, despite his journalistic affiliation, lives in Queens, did not respond—being occupied, word had it at the time, in hammering out a position paper on *Muriel.*

Though there has never been a shortage of ardor in aesthetic debate, the quality of the passions engaged by this one suggests that more than a personal antagonism is involved and that more is at stake than mere differences of taste. And, indeed, as any reader of the film quarterlies will know, while the rest of us have been arguing over such questions as whether or not Antonioni is boring, there has been raging in film circles a full-scale ideological battle which leaves that sort of thing far behind. This battle, known as the Auteur Controversy, has rent film criticism into opposing camps, pitted East Coast against West, brought about agonizing reappraisals on the editorial pages of existing film magazines, and infiltrated critical discourse about the movies with a host of new words, attitudes, and mannerisms as alluring to their users as they are infuriating, when not incomprehensible, to most people on the outside.

It all started in Paris in the late 1950's with the group of French critics associated with *Cahiers du Cinema,* a monthly periodical which strikes the casual browser on first encounter as something of a cross between *Photoplay* and *Botteghe Oscure.* Impeccably austere of format in the Gallimard mode, it combines epigraphs from Hegel, Baudelaire, the Marquis de Sade, and Edgar Allen Poe with tiny, scowling photographs of American movie stars, mainly of the 40's. Though it is highly doubtful that *Cahiers'* readership (among English-speaking adherents at least) even approaches the number of people who quote from it, the magazine nevertheless exercises an incontrovertible cachet in the present dispute; the variations in its critical line, indeed, exert an influence reaching as far as the Melbourne (Australia) *Film Journal.* It was in the pages of *Cahiers'* thirty-first issue (January 1954) that there was first articulated the creed of the *"Politique des Auteurs"*—a reformist manifesto whose essential purpose was to dispel, as it were with one major theoretical thrust, the taint of illegitimacy that still clung to the cinema as an art form. Like any other work of art, a film, the *Cahiers* critics declared, is a totality shaped by, and totally obligated to, the unique personality of its creator. Thus the traditional critical approach to films in terms of their separate elements—acting, story, dialogue, subject matter—was mistaken; a film should instead be viewed as a single formal entity, whose diverse elements were unified by the personality of the artist—in this case, the director. Just as the great painters, playwrights, novelists had left their signatures unmistakably on their masterpieces—allowing us to speak of a "Rembrandt" or a "Picasso"—so were the greatest films

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pervaded by the unique personalities of their directors. And just as the names of the masters in the other arts come in time to serve as a species of automatic guarantee of the caliber of their works —impelling us to examine those works in a spirit of quest rather than judgment (seeking, for example, Shakespeare's esoteric meaning in the apparent ambiguities of *Hamlet,* rather than finding fault with the play on those grounds) —so do the names of the acknowledged masters of film impel us to a similar humility of attitude. The important question then became who these acknowledged masters were, and the *Cahiers* critics obliged by setting up a "pantheon" of the great directors in cinematic history.

Had the young critics of *Cahiers du Cinema* stopped at this point, it is doubtful that word of their efforts would ever have traveled beyond the Left Bank. The list-making compulsion was, to be sure, a trifle odd, but could be viewed as a harmless idiosyncrasy of the French temperament, and the stodgiest of film curators could not have taken exception to the stellar galaxy assembled in the first *Cahiers* pantheon. It subsequently developed, however, that these young men were also passionately addicted to American movies and spent most of their spare time in the basement projection room of the *Cinémathèque Française* watching the gangster films, Westerns, and situation comedies of the Hollywood of the 30's and 40's—as well as, when opportunity presented itself, the even gamier output of Republic and Monogram and PRC [". . . the insidious vertigo of the non-A film . . ."]. Being French, they could not be content to let the matter rest as an underground addiction, but felt constrained to validate their enthusiasms in a complex theoretical structure which would later find expression in the pages of *Cahiers du Cinema* in the form of meticulous analyses of "the thousand beauties of Nicholas Ray's *Party Girl,*" or ". . . the exquisite tensions deployed in *Crimson Kimono* . . ." As a result, the pantheon was gradually expanded to include such directors as Howard Hawks, Samuel Fuller, and Douglas Sirk, whom the *Cahiers* critics joyfully juxtaposed with acknowledged eminences like Griffith, Welles, and Stroheim.

Undismayed (elated, in fact, for that was the point) by the obvious and undeniable disparity between the kinds of films they were describing and the way they were describing them, the *Cahiers* critics used this very disparity as the springboard for a theory of film art which might be regarded as the triumphant apotheosis of the virtue-of-necessity school. Since, for instance, the Hollywood directors they most admired had frequently been assigned bad actors, worse scripts, and inadequate shooting schedules by their studios, a theoretical loophole was devised whereby some of the greatest achievements in film art were found to have resulted from the "tensions" between the artist and his material. Trivial or banal subject matter, far from being damaging, could even serve to enhance a film, for movies were an anti-literary form and the intrusion of "literary" values could only serve to detract from cinematographic ones. And in any case, what made movies good or bad depended scarcely at all on those elements that had always been the concern of critical analysis—the verisimilitude of the actors' performances or the caliber of the scenario; it depended, rather, upon some mysterious interaction of factors which resulted in that ineffable, intangible (and certainly untranslatable) essence of film art: the *"mise-en-scène,"** the "movieness" of movies.

SUCH, IN ESSENCE, are the broad general outlines of the *Cahiers* ideology, grossly oversimplified to be sure, and perhaps inaccurate in certain respects—which in the end makes little or no difference. For the theoretical aspects of the dispute are clearly the least important in explaining its capacity to evoke attention and/or anger. What the Auteur Controversy comes down to in the end is the old quarrel between (good) bad movies and (bad) Good Films—heightened, to be sure, by the addition of French dressing. If the anti-Auteurniks tend to outdo the Auteurniks in anger, it is because, as in all such debates, the (unearned) psychological advantage invariably accrues to the side espousing the chicly disingenuous position—the highbrow affectation of lowbrowism—rather than to the one glumly trapped in sincerity. Moreover, as in all cases of ideological warfare, it is the secondary attributes of the opposing position that prove more inflammatory than its original tenets; and the Auteur position abounds in a host of such characteristics, inherited *en bloc* from the parental organ. What infuriates opponents of the *Cahiers* school is, accordingly, less the theoretical idea of a directors' cinema (in itself scarcely a radical or original notion) than, for instance, the unanimity of all Auteur-oriented critics on the excellence of Edgar Ulmer, not to speak of Alfred Hitchcock.†

* ". . . a certain way of extending the *elans* of the soul in the movements of the body: a song, a rhythm, a dance . . ." This is the definition (by *Cahiers* critic Alexandre Astruc) most frequently cited for this elusive term. Though still invoked in somewhat gingerly fashion, its use has by now become fairly prevalent even in non-Auteur journals—so much so that word had it at press time that *mise en scène* was about to be superceded by *découpage*—a concept which has not yet crossed the Atlantic and which cannot, in any case, be defined without the use of the hands.

† In the absence of other distinguishing characteristics, the position of any film journal *vis-à-vis* the Auteur Controversy can be gauged almost automatically by its editorial line on Hitchcock; a review of a new Hitchcock film is almost invariably made the occasion for a larger ideological statement. Generally speaking, blanket endorsement up to and including *The Birds* is the sign of total Auteur orientation; severe reservations about *The Birds* coupled with amused toleration for *Psycho* signifies a fundamentally anti-formalist orientation (willing, however, to entertain certain reforms in its direction); etc., etc.

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The precise patterns of cultural cross-fertilization can never, of course, be accurately traced, but it may be that the *Cahiers* critics, before being taken up in the United States, were originally influenced by the work of Manny Farber, an American film critic who, without benefit of theory and without resort to inflated language, has long practiced a *"mise-en-scène"* type of criticism and has long admired the more controversial names in the *Cahiers* pantheon.* But so far as the Auteur Controversy proper is concerned, alert trend-spotters (had anyone been looking) might have recognized as a trial balloon an assessment (under Sarris's byline and published in 1961 in the New York quarterly *Film Culture*) of a number of American movie directors. The piece—perhaps because it was couched in rather tentative terms, and lacked that categorical assurance which is the hallmark of Auteur criticism—drew no fire, and it was not until roughly a year later that a two-part document appearing in successive issues of the same magazine (Spring, Summer, 1962) launched the Auteur Controversy on its Anglo-Saxon career. The author of this definitive white paper was, of course, Andrew Sarris.

Part One, "Notes on the Auteur Theory," expounded the three basic tenets of the Auteur aesthetic, defended their value as a technique for judging American movies, and concluded with the assertion that a refusal to view films primarily in directorial terms masked an inherent condescension toward the art of cinema, an unwillingness to acknowledge its equality of status with the other arts. Part Two, proceeding logically from this base, was nothing less than a sixty-seven-page evaluation of the merits (plus a complete listing of the works) of every American director to have made a film in Hollywood between the years 1915 and 1962 in terms of nine possible categories ranging from "Pantheon" to "Esoterica." (An appended note apologized for the unavoidable terseness of the pre-1929 listings, there being little reliable film scholarship on the pre-sound era.) The French gift for abstraction had once again been joined to American technological know-how, with spectacular results.

Needless to say, the Sarris List has since its appearance become the key exhibit in the Auteur polemic, the object of awed admiration or incredulous gibes, depending on one's allegiance, but impossible to ignore. To those with any sort of private penchant for listmaking—which includes all who have ever doodled the names of their friends in descending order of affection on the backs of envelopes, or, in the throes of insomnia, busied themselves making many small words out of one big word or drawing up tables of contents for hypothetical magazines—the Sarris List constitutes something like the final achievement in this area; to those who do not share the impulse, it remains a monster of pointlessness. Yet because of the compelling internal evidence the List reveals of its author's having seen every last one of the films included, it stands as a fairly hefty challenge to those battling professionally for the credentials of film erudition.†

Since quarterly polemics are of necessity attuned to the seasons, some three months went by before the Sarris Papers elicited a rebuttal, but when it came—in the Spring 1963 issue of *Film Quarterly,* the journal which would later carry notice of Macdonald's defection—it came like a lion in the form of a pamphlet-sized demolition-job (laconicism is not a distinguishing trait of film-quarterly polemics) authored by Pauline Kael. Miss Kael subjected "Notes on the Auteur Theory" to a line-by-line textual scrutiny, and after finding it wanting on a variety of philosophic grounds (Platonism was only one of the charges leveled), concluded with the suggestion that the Auteur critics were all suffering from arrested development, given to the overrating of absurd pseudo-tough films because these played along with their "narcissistic male fantasies."**

Sarris's rebuttal to the Kael attack did not, despite a promising title ("Perils of Pauline"), take issue with the points raised. Inhibited perhaps by natural gallantry from responding in kind to the sexual allegation, the author confined himself in large part to attacking the anti-Hollywood stance of the host periodical, as expressed in its veneration of "the espresso pantheon," and to reprinting *in toto* an earlier piece he had published in *Showbill* dealing with four Italian directors, whose purpose was presumably to demonstrate that Auteur tastes in cinema were by no means limited to Allen Dwan and Gerd Oswald, and could rise, when necessary, to the occasion of

* See his article "Underground Films" in COMMENTARY, November 1957.

† For purposes of accurate classification, it should be noted at this point that though *Film Culture* has been consistently hospitable to Auteur-oriented contributors, and has been described for that reason as an "Auteur journal," it does not strictly belong to that category. Literary bastion of the New American Cinema movement, it leans more to the *Sturm und Drang* school of film criticism, as reflected in its championship of the work of filmmakers like Jack Smith, Stan Brakhage, and Gregory Markopoulos—manifestoes by and interviews with whom occupy most of its pages ("Is cinema your love and your death, Gregory?"). But even *Film Culture's* fervent and repeated disavowals of the pale cast of intellect have not been sufficient to guard it against the stresses of ideological discord, and the editor in a recent issue found himself forced to take measures against the "Glossary Group"—a faction of dissident moderates, so-called because of their publication in the magazine of a satiric glossary defining certain articles of faith of the New American Cinema in less than respectful terms.

** Since the intention of these observations is to offer a blueprint of current positions in film criticism, it must be said at this point that the Kael-Sarris Dispute, though equal in vigor, is altogether different in kind from the Macdonald-Sarris Dispute. Kael is in fact a good deal closer to Sarris in, so to speak, *mise-en-scène* than she is to Macdonald—sharing a number of secondary characteristics with the Auteur critics, among them a genuine, long-standing, grass-roots loyalty to American movies, as well as a grimly held belief in Movies as *Fun*.

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celebrating non-coterie achievement. The round appeared to be Kael's as the combatants withdrew to their corners.

In the meantime, however, a second front in the Auteur war came into existence—in England, of all places. Reinforcements that would subsequently enlarge the scanty, though embattled English-speaking Auteur ranks made their appearance in a new film magazine launched in June 1963 in London under the title *Movie.** (An American film magazine, which started publication in Los Angeles at about the same time, bears the title *Cinema,* which about sums it up.) In their pilot issue, the editors of *Movie* came out, in rampant lower case, in dramatic repudiation of everything British cinema had come to stand for—including not only, as might be expected, the comedies of the Boulting Brothers, the Peters Sellers-Margaret Rutherford Axis, the stiff-upper-lip tradition of British comedy, and the sturdy, reasonable bastions of *Sight and Sound* (on whom *Movie*'s editors sternly laid a good part of the blame for the parlous state of British films), but also what they called "the Woodfall Answer." This designation referred to the spate of recent English films of the kippers-and-herring-in-the-Midlands school, on the basis of which poor misguided England had deluded herself into believing she too was having a new wave. "Significant, 'working-class' subjects combined with conscientious attempts at style" were not the solution, cried the editors of *Movie,* and by way of demonstrating the direction of their own commitments, emblazoned their pilot issue with the identifying banner of the *Cahieriste* legions—a List, whose stunning compression made the Sarris List appear a prodigy of diffidence by comparison. In the space of a single page the editors of *Movie* achieved a comparative quantification of the talent-level of 71 British directors and 132 American ones, in terms of six different categories, employing the technique at the same time for the currently fashionable British pastime of self-deprecation. Not a single resident Briton placed in the first category ("Great"), shared by Howard Hawks and Alfred Hitchcock, and only one apiece made the second two ("Brilliant," "Very Talented"), as opposed to 11 and 21 respectively on the American team. Only once on the chart did the British Empire achieve numerical superiority, and that was in the mournful final category: "The Rest." Said the accompanying text, with a certain gloomy satisfaction, ". . . the Histograms demonstrate the British cinema's lack of what we would consider as talent . . ."

The first journal actually to be created under the stresses of the Auteur Controversy (with the exception of the *New York Film Bulletin,* one of the primordial swamps cited by Macdonald which appears infrequently and is, moreover, mimeographed), *Movie* can serve as a showcase of Auteur principles in an alien habitat. Beginning with its pilot issue, which juxtaposed analyses of the respective oeuvres of Vincente Minnelli and Luis Buñuel (with space rather heavily favoring Minnelli), the magazine has continually endorsed the basic principle of the *Cahiers* aesthetic. This principle, which amounts in effect to playing the High and the Low off against the Middle, is reflected both in the composition of the magazine as a whole (featuring each month at least one member of the Hollywood Pantheon—Hitchcock, Hawks, Tashlin, Aldrich, Preminger—together with one representative of the more *recherché* of the European Experimental school) and in the style of the individual contributions. Following their French masters, *Movie*'s critics delight in talking about the Hobbesian worldview of *Underworld U.S.A.,* or the Shakespearean approach of *Rio Bravo,* but this critical technique, like grand opera, comes off somewhat better in a foreign language.†

Since *Movie* goes in heavily for interviews with directors, its pages are an unfailing source of the particular kind of contretemps to which this aesthetic mode is most vulnerable: persecution of the artist by his admirers. Virtually every issue of *Movie* contains at least one example of the Perplexed Director in the grip of the Avid Interviewer with dialogue resembling the following:

> Interviewer (hungrily): What would you say *I Was a Male War Bride* was *really* about?
> Howard Hawks (puzzled): Oh, I don't know. Two people get married and red tape keeps them from sleeping together . . .

Indeed, the intricate equilibrium on which the Auteur theory rests is in danger of being shattered each time a Pantheon director comes face to face with his disciples. An incident which could have had dire consequences occurred some years ago in the course of a notorious interview between Hitchcock and François Truffaut. Hitchcock agreed with Truffaut that his American period was superior to his British one, only to be confronted with the distressed reminder that he had once made the opposite declaration to a British interviewer; ideological chaos was averted on that occasion only by Hitchcock's cheerful willingness to admit that he had lied the first time.

**Movie*'s editors were subsequently to enter the lists firmly on Sarris's side in the Kael-Sarris feud. Their point-by-point rebuttal of the original Kael rebuttal seemed to have closed the issue for good. Even as this manuscript was being concluded, however, the question was being reopened by Volume One, Number One of *The Moviegoer*—the newest, to date, of the film journals—which took the "plague on both your houses" position, in fact denying that the Auteur Controversy existed at all.

† Robert Aldrich achève l'accord par une dissonance exacte, la description lucide et lyrique d'un monde en décadence, aseptique, métallique, sans issue; la chronique des derniers sursauts de ce qui demeure d'humain en l'homme au milieu d'un univers purement artificiel, d'où la nature, jadis chantée dans Bronco Apache, *a été presque systématiquement exclue. . . .*

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The case of Robert Aldrich, however, was not resolved so painlessly. Formerly a front-runner with the *Cahiers* critics, Aldrich lost favor not too long ago with the statement that he has always detested the film *Kiss Me Deadly,* a work of his which had long served in the *Cahiers* arsenal as triumphant proof that in movies, form is content.

If *Movie* seems on occasion to have traded its sense of humor for a mess of *potage, Sight and Sound* has in general weathered the Auteur Controversy with a calm dignity befitting its venerable status (it was founded in 1932). Steadfastly refusing to be swayed in its convictions by the temptations of mere novelty, *S&S* had nonetheless—even before the launching of *Movie*—opened its pages to the consideration of the new ideas from across the channel. These ideas were presented to its readers primarily through the agency of Richard Roud, movie critic (and entrepreneur, among others, of the New York Film Festival) whose three-fold credentials made him eminently suited to the role of mediator and cultural ambassador: American birth, Parisian sojourn, London domicile. As suavely as a diplomat, Roud undertook in frequent articles and reviews to purge the *Cahiers* aesthetic of its more spectacular gallicisms, rendering it palatable for British consumption. Even while *S&S*'s editor, Penelope Huston, was arguing gently but firmly that the time had not quite come when it was safe to jettison principles of commitment and humanism in the cinema, Roud was proving with equal persuasiveness further back in the book that there might be something besides villainy and giddiness in the suggestion that movies with no overt social significance and which did not, even on the face of it, engage with substantial themes, could yet by some mysterious alchemy work toward a moral effect—that, in short, "form is at least *as* important as content." In the end, something like a modus vivendi was suggested when Miss Huston conceded (Spring '62) that the British "breakthrough" hadn't come to much, and asked whether it might not indeed be time to do a bit of thinking along continental lines—"cinema as language" and all the rest of it, *à la* Antonioni, Truffaut, and Godard. A similar concession was made at roughly the same time by *S&S*'s opposite number in America, that very *San Francisco Film Quarterly* which found itself in the course of the past year at odds in its Correspondence and Controversy section with no less than three erstwhile valued contributors representing as many critical positions. Perhaps it was these intimations of discontent that led *FQ*'s editor, Ernest Callenbach, to come out with an editorial statement rather more lyrically couched than is the magazine's wont, in favor of a more "personal," "expressive" cinema regardless of where it might lead.

In the light of these concessions by the opposition to the allure of the Auteur method, there is a certain irony in recent signs that all is not well within the inner circle of the Auteur camp itself. Two communications, published respectively in *Film Quarterly* and *Sight and Sound,* seem to indicate that two of the leading *Cahiers* critics, Francois Truffaut and Jacques Rivette—members of that threesome which, with Godard, used to meet daily at the *Cinémathèque* back in 1950—were on the verge of defection. In separate interviews, each stated that content might be as important as form—and that, in fact, movies without plots were becoming a bore. Truffaut went so far as to add that he now "detested" the gangster genre.

The reasons behind these developments are not known, but it has been suggested that contributing factors may have been the growing excesses of the MacMahonist faction—a dissident group within the *Cahiers* camp who have established a pantheon-within-the-pantheon, led by the four directors Fritz Lang, Joseph Losey, Raoul Walsh, and Otto Preminger, life-size portraits of whom adorn the lobby of the movie theater on rue MacMahon dedicated exclusively to the showing of Hollywood "genre" films. Typical of the MacMahonist aesthetic is the following (by Michel Mourlet, chief MacMahonist): "Charlton Heston is an axiom. By himself alone he constitutes a tragedy, and his presence in any film whatsoever suffices to create beauty . . . one can say that Charlton Heston, by his existence alone, gives a more accurate definition of the cinema than films like *Hiroshima Mon Amour* or *Citizen Kane,* whose aesthetic either ignores or impugns Charlton Heston . . ."

EVERYTHING COMES full circle eventually on the cultural merry-go-round. The *Cahiers du Cinema* aesthetic originally constituted another stage in that traditional attempt by the High to achieve liberation from the Middle by mimicking the styles and enthusiasms of the Low. In the end, however, as usually happens, the Low got wind of what was going on and proceeded to upset the applecart by imitating its imitators—affecting its own style at one remove, and in so doing replacing its initial vigor by shabby-genteel "refinement." Volume One, Number 4 of *Cinema* offers accordingly the most unsettling version of the *Cahiers* Pantheon-syndrome yet to appear: a list (sandwiched in between cheesecake pictures of foreign film stars of a high gloss) of the twenty-two favorite directors of the magazine's editor, beginning with Fellini, ending with Billy Wilder and reaching a high point in the middle with Walt Disney—"as a guide," says the accompanying manifesto, "to the real 'movie stars'—the men who make the films . . ."

Où sont les movies d'antan?

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LEADING CONTENDERS
National Book Awards

The judges for the 1964 National Book Awards are reading widely to find the books that they will choose in March as the most distinguished books by American authors published in the United States during 1963. Some of the books they find most outstanding are listed below:

POETRY

At the End of the Open Road LOUIS SIMPSON Wesleyan
Collected and New Poems: 1924-1963 MARK VAN DOREN Hill and Wang
Moving Target W. S. MERWIN Atheneum
Selected Poems JOHN CROWE RANSOM Knopf
To Mix With Time MAY SWENSON Scribners

Judges: Jean Garrigue, Anthony Hecht, John Hall Wheelock

FICTION

The Centaur JOHN UPDIKE Knopf
The Group MARY McCARTHY Harcourt, Brace and World
Idiots First BERNARD MALAMUD Farrar, Straus
V THOMAS PYNCHON Lippincott
The Will HARVEY SWADOS World

Judges: John Cheever, Robie Macauley, Philip Rahv

OTHER

Anti-Intellectualism in American Life RICHARD HOFSTADTER Knopf
Apollinaire: Poet Among the Painters FRANCIS STEEGMULLER Farrar, Straus
Beyond the Melting Pot NATHAN GLAZER and DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN MIT—Harvard
Change, Hope and the Bomb DAVID E. LILIENTHAL Princeton
The Civil War SHELBY FOOTE Random
The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera BERTRAM D. WOLFE Stein and Day
The Fire Next Time JAMES BALDWIN Dial
The First New Nation SEYMOUR M. LIPSET Basic Books
John Keats: The Making of a Poet AILEEN WARD Viking
John Keats WALTER JACKSON BATE Harvard
The Last Horizon R. F. DASMANN Macmillan
Man-Made America: Chaos or Control? CHRISTOPHER TUNNARD and BORIS PUSHKAREV Yale
The Quiet Crisis STUART UDALL Holt, Rinehart and Winston
The South and the Southerner RALPH McGILL Atlantic Monthly Press—Little, Brown
Success Story: The Life and Times of S. S. McClure PETER LYONS Scribners
Wasp Farm HOWARD ENSIGN EVANS Natural History Press—Doubleday

Judges: *Arts and Letters*—Charles Rolo, John K. Sherman, Wylie Sypher
Science, Philosophy and Religion—Houston Peterson, Paul B. Sears, George Shuster
History and Biography—Benjamin DeMott, James Thomas Flexner, C. Vann Woodward

The National Book Awards are administered by the National Book Committee, a non-profit educational association. The awards consist of $1000 prizes donated by the American Book Publishers Council, the American Booksellers Association, and the Book Manufacturers Institute.

Watch for announcement of the winners—Tuesday, March 10

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JEWISH CAMP

ONCE UPON A DROSHKY. By JEROME CHARYN. *McGraw-Hill. 222 pp. $4.95.*

SEVEN DAYS OF MOURNING. By L. S. SIMCKES. *Random House. 113 pp. $3.95.*

Reviewed by
THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

A FEW YEARS ago, I belonged to an informal circle at the University of Chicago. Most of us were graduate students in English, either active or lapsed, and most of us were also Jewish. The latter tie was one that we seldom dwelt on as such, so engrossed were we in more immediate problems of identity, one of which was to confirm the belief that we were contemporary literary intellectuals, wholly at home in the society and its culture, as well as the legitimate heirs to at least one period of English or American literature. However, every so often we would let all that go, and at a party or some other boozy occasion, we would begin to turn each other on by telling Jewish jokes. Once the spirit of Jewish exotica descended upon us, we could go on for hours, taking even the chestnuts from adolescence and investing them with elaborate character portrayals, cunning nuances of accent and idiom, bizarre twists of the formerly simple plot line, and even an occasional stab at profundity, furnished by Buber. As a result, the punch line was often the weakest point in the joke, a small mouse of irony all but done in by the exaggerated labors to produce it. However, even when we were not all that amusing to each other we could count on the fascination of the audience who were not Jewish and who seemed to regard their ability to get with the intricacies and intimacies of life behind the tailor shop or in "Rabbi's study" as an index of their sophistication.

No doubt one of the reasons why we carried on in this way was that there was a particular satisfaction in acting on the idea that being Jewish had suddenly become a very interesting thing to be in the eyes of our Gentile friends. This was the period when all of us were reading Bellow, Malamud, Singer, *et al.* with a great sense of discovery. No doubt, too, these protracted bouts of joke-telling also furnished some relief from the various kinds of protective camouflage we wore from class to class, and from the paper on George Herbert to the one on Henry James. And, of course, these bouts provided a broad opportunity for that admixture of affection and wryness, curiosity and knowingness, sentimentality and scurrility toward things Jewish that appears to be the final reflex of Jewish identity as it sinks beneath the sands of assimilation. However, since most of us comedians were fiction writers manqué, I think that the main incentive and satisfaction were that Jewish character and color and idiom served to spring our imagination: the jokes became a virtually free object of mimicry and fantasy, one that incorporated a range of personal feelings without the pressure of social involvement or the demands of serious representation. In short, what goes by the name just now of "camp."

ALL OF WHICH brings me to the vogue of contemporary American-Jewish fiction, specifically to two recent examples of it—Jerome Charyn's *Once Upon A Droshky* and L. S. Simckes's *Seven Days of Mourning*. The jacket copy of each of these first novels emphasizes its close relation to the tradition of Jewish humor and art and also its exuberant inventiveness. The novels themselves are both set in the heartland of Jewishness—the Lower East Side—presented in its most indigenous and "wild" aspects, or at least what remains of them. Charyn's *Once Upon A Droshky* is a takeoff on a surviving remnant of the Second Avenue Theater and cafeteria scene as it passes before the eyes and through the memory of an old madcap Yiddish actor. Simckes's *Seven Days of Mourning* is contained entirely within a Broome Street flat and provides a slice of Jewish family life so decayed and weird as to belong to nothing so much as the ages and the present. In short, both novels look like the real thing—*Yiddishkeit* with a modern twist—at least to the foreign eye. I suspect that this is the main reason why they were published by Random House and McGraw Hill respectively, and why both these houses, which pride themselves on their taste as well as enterprise in fiction, should have had high hopes for them. "Jewish" fiction is caviar for the happy few; it is also "seminal" in somewhat the same way that Southern fiction was said to be a decade ago. One imagines that the audience envisioned for these two novels is a mass version of those sharp young intellectual types who were so easily amused and moved by those performances of ours in Chicago.

Nor would Charyn or Simckes have been out of place among the performers. Charyn is a graduate student at Columbia; Simckes is at Harvard. Though Simckes is said to come "from a long line of rabbis," I doubt if he knows much more about Broome Street than I do or that Charyn knows about the recondite culture of the Royale and the plays of Jacob Gordin. Since both are obviously talented young writers, trained in literature, the only reasons I can adduce as to why each of them has chosen to launch his career with such thin improvised versions of the immigrant folkways is that there is a literary premium on them today and that each in his own way has fallen under the facile spell of Jewish camp. Although *Seven Days of Mourning* drags some sort of ser-

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ious meaning in tow, while *Once Upon A Droshky* is burlesque occasionally cut with literary sentiment, the essential impulse of both novels is an impersonation act. Here is Charyn, crouched inside of Yankel Rabinowitz, relating the origin of the actor's fatal feud with Pincus, the critic:

> "I'm telling you the midget was insane. The biggest actresses fell in love with him, one after the other. Like flies! But he wanted only Shaindele! And when he wrote her messages, who do you think he picked out to deliver them? Me! And when I appeared at the dressing room with Pincus' messages, she chased out all the other chorus girls, closed the curtain and dragged me over to the couch. Why should I lie? You think I didn't enjoy myself! A John Alden I never was, and I'll never be! . . . The girl wore me out! What, at least at the *Silver Draidl* I had time to relax . . ."

And so forth. With his John Aldens and *Silver Draidls*, Charyn re-creates his "world" as a comedy routine rooted in frequent references to Tomashevsky, Ben-Ami, Joseph Buloff, the names of theaters, plays, and streets as well as to cockroaches, pushcarts, and borsht and boiled potatoes. After a promising start the characters fall into a series of flat exotic types—the gentled ex-mobster, the demented peddler, the avaricious landlord, the crooked lawyer, the slovenly cafeteria owner, the superannuated chippy, the rich but obese widow. There is a plot of sorts which keeps Yankele scurrying between the "Golden Age Center" in Washington Heights and Schimmel's Cafeteria somewhere around Second Avenue, where his old gang of Yiddish ne'er-do-wells has taken its last refuge against the forces of modern progress and corruption. Held together mainly by verbal energy, the thinness of Charyn's material inevitably drives him to an increasingly antic and bizarre treatment. The net result is a kind of animated cartoon of the Second Avenue cultural life that, unlike Grace Paley's *Goodby and Good Luck*, reveals less of a sense of that life's natural character than of the author's straining sense of humor.

Seven Days of Mourning, on the other hand, is mainly repulsive. Here is Simckes, masquerading as the witty, sadistic son of an immigrant family:

> Yanina's coming home could only make the house more interesting and you can be sure nothing in the world would have persuaded me to save my family from what I knew would be the most painful moment in its history. . . . So I am very grateful to my nitwit sister Bracha for doing away with herself when no one expected it of her. I am grateful because she brought us all together again. . . . Poor Bracha, she was as quick and thorough as a taxicab, and no one could stop her, not even the nuts who befriended her. And despite her efforts, we Shimanskys weren't taking any notice.

Lacking Charyn's gift for mimicry, his intuitive, if trivializing, feeling for the flavor and accent of the Yiddish-American scene, Simckes attempts to get along by rendering Jewish marginality as disease and its religious traditions as a psychiatric cure. No Zionist of the old school, railing against the pathology of the ghetto, could begin to conceive of the grotesque Shimanskys locked up together in their flat and their dementia. In a race with nausea, I shall try to be quick. For the conventional domineering mother and the ineffectual father of the immigrant household, Simckes brings forward an obese little monster of persecution and a skeleton in underwear who survives by weeping, shivering, and choking fits. Along with the feebleminded daughter who has been shut away and killed herself and the narrator who is permanently crippled, there is an older daughter who is a slightly more winning version of her mother, her husband who suffers from brain damage, and their hysterical child who also has recessive testicles. To complete the picture there is a grandfather who lives alone and spends his time draining his wens, and a neighbor who likes to demonstrate the mysteries of life by taking the Shimansky children into the bathroom with her. In case anyone should miss what is known in creative writing courses as the "point of view," Simckes alludes at every early opportunity to the animal-like nature of his characters, drawing his analogues mainly from the lower phyla—snails, lizards, kitchen-beetles, spiders, and so forth—and joins the action to the theme by focusing upon the characters' marginally psychotic oral and anal fixations.

INTO THIS Jewish menage—or better, menagerie—is eventually introduced Vossen Gleich, a deformed quack who brings with him rabbinical light and group therapy. Since everyone has to be a psychic freak to balance on this sharply tilted stage, Gleich is sane mainly by comparison and through the requirements of the theme, which is that only by properly mourning the death of the daughter and by having, as they say, pity and love, and a bit of genital sex, will the family be cured. (At the end Gleich is fixing up the narrator with a humpbacked dwarf.) With the appearance of Gleich the book suddenly swells with those hints of profundity that my friends and I in Chicago liked to toss in every so often: "Life is a misfortune . . ." says Gleich, "but we must make it sacred." Or: "I am Gleich . . . if I wound, I heal." Or: "Like your mother, you're bitter. And like your father, you don't want to change." The traditions of Judaism and psychoanalysis are whispering to us. But no earned possibility of change is reached: how could it be when not even Dorothy Day could help Simckes's Shimanskys. The whispers, along with a thought or two from Norman O. Brown, are merely part of the camp and make Simckes's venture into Jewish folk life intellectually as well as morally vulgar.

Two blurbs are to be found on the back of *Seven Days of Mourning*. Bernard Malamud describes the book as "imperfect" but still "an original feat of the imagination. It cleanses and purifies through love for the human being." The other comment is by the critic Albert J. Guerard: "At his best [Simckes] challenges, for outrageous and ruthless invention, both Isaac Babel and Bernard Malamud. The novel is sad, funny, insufferably and excitingly human." Ordinarily blurbs aren't meant to mean much and it's a

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cheap tactic to take an advantage of them, but these two happen to signify pretty well the terms of the literary cachet of American-Jewish fiction just now, which not even a book such as Simckes's seems able to question, much less reduce.

This fiction, so its reputation goes, is full of "invention" (imagination, vitality, wildness, etc.) and it is human (compassionate, loving, radiant with insight, etc.). Since genuine vitality and humanity are in short supply these days in fiction, as everywhere else, one can understand why they should be so much appreciated and why pretensions to them should be so easily confused with the real thing. However, as conventions of a new genre of Jewish folk writing represented by these two novels as well as by, say, Norman Fruchter's *Coat Upon a Stick,* or Edward Adler's *Notes from a Dark Street,* they derive from a patently tenuous and arbitrary, when not also narcissistic, relation to the folk material that provides their basis. The truth is that as one moves from Babel to Malamud to a writer like Simckes, the use of this material becomes increasingly exploitative ("outrageous, ruthless") in the separation of supposedly Jewish values and modes of behavior from the actual culture in which they were part of a coherent way of life and through which they gain their authority as aspects of human behavior and value as such. Jewish character, color, idiom, tradition, etc. used merely as literary props to achieve distinctiveness or as a kind of trampoline upon which assimilated young writers find they can perform will inevitably lose their integrity, become inauthentic, and more likely than not, turn into the grotesque both in subject matter and treatment. "I was, with God's help, a poor man," says Sholem Aleichem's Tevye, with the complete aptness, the lack of literary distortion given to a folk artist who is in perfect touch with his world. But once the common folk life and the expressive purposes to which it is put become separated, either through the writer's intention or ignorance, he enters the realm of the inauthentic, which takes a great deal of moral autonomy and art to redeem. For folk material has a way of taking its revenge upon the writer who is exploiting it. In the case of Adler and Fruchter it dries up and becomes abstract; in the case of Charyn it flickers intermittently and goes out; in the case of Simckes it quickly sickens, dies, and rots in his hands.

THE FREE CRIMINAL

LAW, LIBERTY, AND PSYCHIATRY. By THOMAS S. SZASZ. *Macmillan. 281 pp. $7.50.*

Reviewed by GEORGE P. ELLIOTT

THE SUBJECT of this book is the unfortunate marriage of law and psychiatry in the United States. It recommends that they be divorced immediately. The author, who is himself a psychoanalyst and a professor of psychiatry, holds some old-fashioned views: he exalts liberty as a great social good and that major premise of liberty, moral responsibility, as a great individual good. He is really in earnest: he says that most of those who are called mentally ill should be granted their liberty and their responsibility, of which they are deprived by the joint workings of psychiatry and the law in far too many cases.

This is a matter of social importance, about which there should be instituted that sort of heated public debate prerequisite to serious reform. There was a chance that the trial of Lee Oswald might have started this debate. Socially, the worst consequence of Ruby's shooting Oswald (supposing Oswald to have been demonstrably guilty) was the substitution of a probably unimportant trial for one in which this social issue would at least have been clearly raised and which would possibly have become the stimulus for a reform movement.

Ruby pleads "not guilty by reason of insanity," but no debate is likely to be started by this plea, whatever the outcome. If his plea fails and he is executed, society will accept this as a sort of pest riddance. If his plea succeeds and he is put in a mental hospital, no strong desire for vengeance will have been thwarted and his incarceration will be accepted as a usual operation of the law. The vexing question of the responsibility of the Dallas police in this murder will be allowed to subside into that twilight sleep in which society allows the whole question of police collusion with the underworld to stir restlessly like a bad dream. The question of liberty will scarcely have been roused from its complacent dream: so long as Ruby's locked up, it doesn't matter much what he's locked in.

But to Dr. Szasz it matters very much what a person who has committed a crime is locked in and why he is locked there. Dr. Szasz is an old-fashioned, stubborn liberal capable of being outraged at society's dereliction of duty. He refuses to acquiesce in the general evasiveness. He is a gadfly. He won't let the big old question about free will and determinism alone, even though it cannot be answered once and for all and even though the law is doing a pretty decent job of avoiding it by turning over to psychiatry as many cases as it can.

Here, approximately, is the structure of Dr. Szasz's argument. If we value political freedom, we must assume that each person is to some degree free to perform important actions. To the extent that he has freely chosen to do an act, he is responsible for the consequences of the act, good and bad. If the act breaks the rules of the game as society has laid them down, then he is guilty, and society is obligated, by its own rules, to blame and punish him. To refuse to punish—and even more, to refuse to blame—an adult who has broken the rules of the social game is to say to him in effect: "If you were a man, we would punish you. By not punishing you, we show you where we rank you: below slaves, for we punish them; below idiots, for we cannot blame those who cannot understand what we say to them; nowhere, in fact." For society to substitute enforced psychiatric treatment of the law-breaker for the punishment his act requires is to pollute genuine psychiatry, to rob the criminal of his dignity as a man, and severely to abridge freedom in society as a whole. A society which cherishes the freedom and dignity of its individual citi-

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zens will punish those who break its laws.

(As a teacher of literature who believes that great books are in some way sources of moral wisdom, I interject the observation that I can think of no great book which runs counter to Dr. Szasz's argument, but of several which more or less directly support it—for example, *The Oresteia, Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus, The Divine Comedy, Crime and Punishment.* In any dispute on an ethical issue, when I see a number of great writers on one side and on the other side nothing but local practice, I am disposed in favor of the first side, even though the local practice is the custom of my own age and nation and has the guns with it.)

Dr. Szasz's argument necessarily requires anyone who has committed a crime to be brought to trial, accused, convicted, and punished. The only time for psychiatry to enter the proceedings would be after the conviction. If the punishment were death and if the law required the condemned man to be sane enough to understand why he was being killed, then psychiatrists might be called in to say whether in their opinion he was sane enough to understand what was being said to him. But the final decision on his sanity would have to be made by a judge who would rely on his own observation of the prisoner as much as on the psychiatrists' report. If the punishment were life imprisonment, then psychiatrists would be called in to treat him or to hospitalize him in a prison hospital only as he was not able to function as a prisoner, precisely as medical doctors treat and hospitalize prisoners with physical ailments.

But according to standard American practice now, psychiatry can, and often does, muddy the operations of the law in one or more of several ways. For example, a man who commits a murder could be declared to have been insane at the time he committed the crime, in which case no trial would take place, though he would be held in a state mental hospital for an indeterminate time, almost certainly for life. Since the living conditions in state mental hospitals are commonly as bad as they are in state prisons and often worse, and since the reason given for his detention there would be that he was ill, he would be denied the possible benefits of social punishment while being subjected to all the pains of incarceration. And since the psychiatrists, from the point of view of any prisoner/patient, are in fact guards, are agents of the state more than they are agents of medical science or of the prisoner/patient's own will, they almost certainly would not be able to help him—as a psychiatrist can often help a patient who has come to him voluntarily and who can voluntarily discontinue treatment at any time.

A MURDERER'S trial can also be frustrated by the psychiatrists' declaring him too ill mentally to stand trial. This, Dr. Szasz argues, is a legitimate reason not to try a person only if the accused is grossly and obviously unable to comprehend what is happening. If we are willing to try a moron for murder, as we are, then we must also try a person whose sanity is impaired for other reasons but who is not thoroughly, in the opinion of judge and jury, cut off from other people. But any serious offender who is declared incapable of standing trial is then turned over, without due process and without fixed sentence, to psychiatrists/jailers who treat/pseudo-punish him in a hospital/prison for an indeterminate time.

If, finally, an offender is sentenced to death, his execution can be prevented by the psychiatrists' declaring him too mentally ill to be executable. This is sometimes a valid reason for staying execution, but commonly it is not; for it makes little sense to leave a citizen undisturbed so long as he manages to get along, but then, as soon as he kills someone, to discover that he is burdened with a severe case of paranoid schizophrenia, and so is not well enough to be executed.

The crucial question, of course, is freedom of the will. Without will, no crime and no punishment. Without reason, no will. Disturbance of the reason, impairment of the will. Ordinary citizens and the men of law are unsure about how to measure the extent of a disturbance in a man's reason. Psychiatry has thrown doubt on the traditional answer (which is roughly Dr. Szasz's answer: treat him like a man as long as you possibly can). No decent person wants to blame a man who was not able to be guilty, or to inflict pain on a man who does not know the pain is punishment. But how to tell in any given case? In this very large area of contingency and opinion, psychiatry has officiously offered its services, partly from the self-serving desire of some psychiatrists to be important and powerful and partly from philosophy. According to this philosophy, there is probably no such thing as freedom of the will—which is to say, an uncaused or self-caused wish. Second, even if there is some free will, there is none in mental illness, for it is of the nature of mental illness for acts to be forced by unconscious motives. Third, even if there is a trace of free will left in those who are mentally sick, there is certainly none in a criminal act, since (O perfect-circle logic!) to commit a crime is on the face of it proof of mental illness. (This astonishing conclusion is possible only because psychiatry has no fixed standard of measurement, such as the speed of light or the boiling point of water, but measures individual behavior according to social customs and manners. In other words, it is somewhat as though physics had only rubber yardsticks to measure with.)

There are no legally definable standards by which to measure mental health (so that it is possible for institutional psychiatrists to say that they are keeping patients locked up for their mental health). Malpractice suits are not in fact brought against institutional psychiatrists (Dr. Szasz urges such suits to the attention of eager lawyers). If a patient is, as he is quite likely to be, weak, ignorant, poor, and terrified, as well as uncertain of his competence, he does not know the few legal redresses available to him; and the psychiatrists (for the good of his mental health naturally) carefully refrain from telling him what those redresses are, as medical doctors used to

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bully patients before malpractice suits scared them into treating patients like people most of the time.

Dr. Szasz sees all this as leading to what he terms "the therapeutic state," in which the citizen is viewed as a dependent whose health and welfare (and body and mind) must constantly be under surveillance and whose violation of the social rules is interpreted as a symptom of mental illness which must be treated whether or not he wants the treatment and even though the treatment, as in the case of a lobotomy, may be a form of destruction of the person more dreadful than death. (See Ken Kesey's novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.*)

WHETHER American society is ready to accept "the therapeutic state," I am not sure. That we are threatened with it, Dr. Szasz argues persuasively (though he does not always argue calmly and lucidly), and he cites convincing examples in support of his argument. The one that chilled me the most was a quotation from a speech delivered in 1961 by Attorney General Robert Kennedy, in which he expressed approval of open-end sentences, their length to be determined by therapeutic considerations.

> . . . more than half of all defendants committed to prison are sentenced under some form of indeterminate sentence. . . . In the long run, a flexible sentencing procedure which works to rehabilitate offenders offers the best hope in the majority of cases in the federal courts.

In other words, we are not content with judging that a man is guilty of a particular act and then putting him in prison for a fixed period to punish him for the act, leaving his soul for him to save or lose as he wills; we presume to judge the health of his soul and to hang on to him till we judge his soul to be in a condition that pleases us. This is the next greatest presumptuousness possible. The greatest is that of Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor: he too took it upon himself to control other people's souls, but he knew what he was doing.

I am sure that a lot of people have no objection to drifting into "the therapeutic state" as we seem to be doing. (How zealous the mental health experts are in scaring us into their arms. The last I heard, about one in six of us are supposed to be mentally well, and a good tenth of the five-sixths who are mentally sick are psychotic. Doctor! Help!) One way to get a glimpse of the spirit of the age is to read the themes of "C" students in a provincial college. One of mine recently described King David's taking of Bath-sheba as "the acting out of lustful fantasies."

FOREIGN INTERESTS

THE PRESS AND FOREIGN POLICY BY BERNARD C. COHEN. *Princeton University Press. 279 pp. $6.00.*
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND FOREIGN POLICY BY JAMES N. ROSENAU. *Princeton University Press. 362 pp. $8.50.*

Reviewed by RONALD STEEL

JOURNALISTS, like everybody else, tend to be happiest when they are comfortably swaddled in myths. Among their favorites is the myth that the press is a neutral conveyor belt which serves the democratic process by providing the factual information on which the public forms its judgments. The theory assumes not only that it is "the people" who make the decisions in a democratic society, but that they really care about such nuances of foreign policy as dumping Ngo Dinh Diem or selling wheat to the Russians. Given this assumption, the people obviously must have the facts so that they can pass on their instructions to their obedient legislators and civil servants. The public's "right to know" is thus enshrined in every editor's heart.

Yet even while pledging allegiance to this Platonic myth, the press knows better than to follow through its own precepts. If it did, foreign affairs would have to take up one-third of news space and most of the nation's papers would go broke tomorrow. Even the New York *Times,* the opinion-maker's Bible, devotes only 10 per cent of its news space to foreign coverage, and the nationwide average is nearer 4 per cent. Newspapermen know very well that their public would much rather follow the adventures of Daisy Mae than those of Kwame Nkrumah. But at the some time they have a nagging feeling that this is wrong—that the public, damn it, ought to be informed whether it wants to be or not.

The answer is a happy compromise: the news is watered down to make it comprehensible to devotees of Prince Valiant, spiked with fake crises to draw attention away from Sandy Koufax, and compressed into a few columns so that it won't cut into space reserved for the courthouse scandals and motel raids that sell most newspapers. All this is in honest recognition that only a handful of people know—or care—that Ben Bella is not a silent film star, and Pankow not a German dessert. Then, as though in an afterthought of obeisance to the democratic myth, the truncated mess is put on the front page. Thus the press reconciles its duty to inform "the people" with its desire for self-preservation.

IT IS to this anomaly that Bernard Cohen devotes his attention in a provocative, if rather circumspect, study of the role of the press in the formation of foreign policy. Drawing upon numerous interviews with journalists and policy-makers, he comes to the conclusion that the daily press—by refusing to differentiate among its readers—has misunderstood the role that it plays in democratic policy-making. In diluting the news to catch the eye of the disinterested reader under the assumption that this somehow aids the democratic process, the press abdicates its responsibility to those who have a vital need to be informed. The result is a dearth of analytical news material for the few who actually determine foreign policy, or who even care about it, and a plethora of daily crises which barely capture a passing glance from the general reader. Rather than serving a pablum of easy-to-digest foreign-news tidbits, Mr. Cohen suggests that the press provide analytical interpretation for the minority of its readers who

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depend upon it for forming policy judgments. It is, to borrow the political scientist's jargon, to the "opinion and policy-making elite" and to that small but faithful band known as the "attentive public" that he urges the press to direct its coverage of foreign affairs.

If the press overrates the need to entertain a mass audience with a jazzed-up version of foreign news, it also underrates the role it plays in the shaping of foreign policy. The government officials who try to preserve their secrets from reporters are themselves directly dependent on the daily press for the information on which they make their policy decisions. They are, in other words, trying to withhold information from the press with one hand while reaching out for it with the other. Not that one can blame them. The press has a distressing tendency to question bureaucratic infallibility and to embarrass officials who would prefer to carry out the public business in the soothing shadows of their administrative fortresses. But no matter how antagonistic they may be to reporters, every Washington official knows that it is the New York *Times* and a handful of other newspapers that give them the information they need to carry on their job. To compound the irony: they need the press not only to inform themselves, but also to get their views across to the public so that they can develop a consensus of support that will allow them to carry out their policies. At that point it becomes obvious that the reporter and the government official, rather than being natural enemies, are totally dependent on one another for their survival. They are both allies and competitors, carrying on a perpetual love-hate dialogue for the attention of an abstract and basically uninterested public.

What is to be done? Mr. Cohen would put the burden of proof on the press by having it deal with foreign news the way it does with the bridge column or the stock market—a feature for the reader with specialized interests. We don't imagine that the average reader cares about the Blackwood convention or the earning report of

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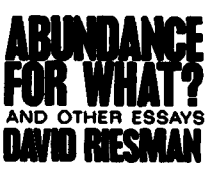

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the Short Line Railroad; why should we assume that he cares about land reform in Chile? Also, instead of using the police courts as training grounds for foreign correspondents, Mr. Cohen would have editors recognize them as part of an elite corps and demand of them the kind of training that diplomats receive. In short, rather than entertaining an indifferent public, he believes the press could best do its duty to democratic policy-making by furnishing the elite with analytical news coverage.

There is a good deal of wisdom in Mr. Cohen's suggestions, as there is justice in his criticisms. As newspapers like *Le Monde* and *The Guardian* demonstrate every day, "what" happened is only meaningful if we are given the "why" behind the story. Certainly the importance of the syndicated columnists and the weekly news magazines in this country is testament to the fact that the daily press, with a few important but rare exceptions, has settled for the role of rag-picker of yesterday's crisis. If our diplomats have done the same, is the press then to blame? Would our foreign policy be more enlightened if the press scuttled the general reader and concentrated on Mr. Cohen's elite? Not very likely, I should imagine, but at least we might get better coverage. Mr. Cohen may have an undue faith in the bureaucracy's desire to inform itself on opinions other than its own. His valuable study, however, indicates that while the American press has been zealous in defending its responsibility to inform the public, it has some quaint ideas about what kind of public it is reaching.

LIKE Mr. Cohen, James Rosenau puts his money on the opinion and policy-making elite. Since the opinion-makers determine policy in a democracy, any consensus they reach should flow smoothly from inception to execution. But somehow it hasn't worked out that way. In this study of the 1958 White House conference called in support of the foreign-aid bill, he has tried to find out why national opinion-makers love foreign aid while Congress can barely stand the sight of it. A member of that school which tends to look on political science as a branch of statistics, Mr. Rosenau has scrutinized a lengthy questionnaire sent out to the 1067 national leaders who attended the conference. After presenting a formidable set of hypotheses and charts, he concludes that the reason Congress is out of step with the elite on the question of foreign aid is that Congressmen are isolated from the national opinion-makers. They are instead subject to the influence of local Rotarians and Chevrolet dealers whose interests are sectional rather than nationwide. The lawmakers, to use the jargon, are constituency-oriented. And this, presumably, is why they hack up the foreign-aid bill every year.

The conclusion is not particularly surprising, but it fails to explain why the ordinary constituents as well as the local opinion-makers should be so opposed to foreign aid when they accept the philanthropy of the Peace Corps with perfect equanimity, why even nationally oriented Congressmen are sometimes more opposed to the aid program than their constituents, or why the Congress is able to subordinate local interests to national ones on a wide range of other issues. Was Senator Morse, for example, knuckling under to narrow-minded Oregonians when he led the "liberal revolt" against foreign aid during the last session of Congress? Despite Mr. Rosenau's awesome tables and questionnaires, may it not be just possible that Congressmen are less isolated from the national consensus than he imagines, that their growing opposition to foreign aid may be their way of responding to its failure in practice rather than simply an expression of narrow regionalism, and that it is the national opinion-makers who may be out of step in this case?

Mr. Rosenau's study is no doubt fair-minded and scrupulous. It might, however, have been more relevant to the problem of foreign-policy leadership had he laid aside his adding machine and hazarded a few more speculations. Politics, happily, isn't a science. At least not yet.

FAITH AND THE ISSUES

THE RELIGOUS PRESS IN AMERICA. By MARTIN E. MARTY, JOHN G. DEEDY, JR., DAVID W. SILVERMAN, and ROBERT LEKACHMAN. *Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 184. pp. $4.00.*

Reviewed by WARREN COFFEY

THE FOUR essays that make up this book were written by a Lutheran minister, a Roman Catholic layman, a Conservative rabbi, and a Barnard College professor of economics, Robert Lekachman, who appears here in the role of kindly outsider. The first three of these writers survey the history of religious journalism within their own groups, judge past and current performance, and end by gazing a little into the future and exhorting their co-religionists to think more in the direction of bringing theology to bear on life in the Republic in these inclement times. In the criticism of current practices and the exhortation to think in larger terms, Professor Lekachman cordially joins. If the book says little that will be very new to those who read the religious press at all, it is nonetheless a useful and, in a low-keyed way, intelligent survey of its subject, and has about it an agreeable air of candor. Nobody in the book seems to have much to crow about. Indeed, there is a sentence by Lord Byron that might have served as epigraph to the whole enterprise: "But God help us all, it is at present a sad jar of atoms."

Martin E. Marty, a Lutheran minister in Elk Grove, Illinois, and an associate editor of *The Christian Century,* does the Protestant press and sees defensiveness as its besetting sin. Too regularly, he believes, Protestant journalism surrenders to "small-bore" denominational goals instead of "giving witness," i.e., bringing to bear on contemporary problems an intelligence and conscience formed by Protestant theology. This is a variant of the criticism made almost a century ago by Matthew Arnold, of the smallness of the life imaged in the Protestant press, "a life of jealousy of the Establishment, dis-

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putes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons." Mr. Marty finds much of the Protestant press in America still determined by a 19th-century idea of its function, and hence ineffectual in the national life. So that when John Glenn orbits the earth, for instance, the Protestant press seizes the occasion to proclaim that little Presbyterians can make good in space. This kind of defensive bluster, Mr. Marty believes, creates a paradox in Protestant journalism: on the one hand, immense activity —many periodicals, sound financing, large circulations, considerable technical skill, freedom from authoritarian control—and on the other, a press that does not reach an audience outside the denominations and that, were it to disappear tomorrow, would not be greatly missed. (Mr. Marty has some rather more cheerful things to say, too, but it has seemed best to get the hard truths out of the way first.)

The Catholic press, where the stigmata bloom in the spring and archbishops telephone God almost every night, is reported on by John G. Deedy, Jr., editor of the *Pittsburgh Catholic*. Mr. Deedy quotes the observation of J. F. Powers that the Catholic press in its dreary negativism and contrariness combines "all the worst features of the bully and the martyr." Its frequent tendency to defensive bluster he explains as a legacy from the Counter-Reformation as well as from the 19th century, when Catholic immigrants often found themselves attacked as dangerous aliens. Mr. Deedy addresses himself also to the problem of authoritarian control of the Catholic press, recently dramatized, he points out, by the fact that both the *New Yorker* and *The Christian Century* could give their readers coverage of the first session of the Vatican Council that was superior to almost anything to be found in American Catholic journals. Mr. Deedy gets off some fine ironic passages, too, in commenting on how the Catholic press, which so hugely enjoys denouncing secularism, itself habitually runs advertisements that the better secular journals would not touch and promotes circulation by highly questionable methods. For Mr. Deedy, the bitterest irony is that the journals that do a conscientious job—*The Commonweal*, for example—are the ones that frequently find themselves short of funds and under fire from the Catholic community. Mr. Deedy has some happier findings to report, but again I shall postpone discussing these for a moment.

David W. Silverman, Rabbi of the Conservative Synagogue of Riverdale, New York, reports on the Jewish press, whose history and predicament he presents as more or less that of *The Girl Who Took the Wrong Turning*. Rabbi Silverman suggests that at the level of the synagogue bulletins and the a-denominational weeklies, with their relentless chronicling of births, Bar Mitzvahs, marriages, and so forth, the Jewish press has a defensive provincialism of its own. But what concerns him much more is that in the serious intellectual journals —COMMENTARY for example—the specifically religious part of Jewish life appears to have been abandoned. The writers in these journals, he implies, are likely to be much more conversant with Fowler's *Modern English Usage* and with developments in the social sciences than with Jewish religious tradition. Ironically, Rabbi Silverman suggests, this situation was in large part brought about by the remarkable success of the Yiddish press in educating and "Americanizing" earlier generations of Jews. The secular emphasis of the press of that period and the failure of the rabbinate of the time to reach the new immigrants combined to cause the sons and daughters of those immigrants to view their religion as a species of irrelevant folklore that got in the way of their becoming American.

THE LAST essay in the book is the work of Robert Lekachman, an economist by trade but also a member of the study commission on Religion and Free Society of the Fund for the Republic and a writer long interested in the workings of religion in a pluralistic society. Professor Lekachman records his disappointment at the failure of even the best religious

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journals "to sound a clear religious note in the public dialogue." Either these journals fail to show that religion has anything to say about, for example, the danger of thermonuclear war (the failure of relevance); or they abdicate judgment on economic problems (the failure of scope); or, taking a stand on public questions, they announce attitudes and principles rather than specific programs (the failure of precision). What it comes down to is that the religious journals either say nothing on public questions or else offer opinions indistinguishable from those to be found in the good secular journals. The fact that Professor Lekachman is able to single out half a dozen religious magazines (*The Christian Century, Christianity and Crisis, The Commonweal, America, Midstream,* COMMENTARY) as consistently civilized in tone and serious in purpose hardly offsets the general melancholy of his conclusions. (The *Christian Science Monitor* might perhaps have been added to Professor Lekachman's list, but it has largely foregone its original religious function in order to perform a straight news and interpretation service.)

AGAINST ALL this, what can be said? Not a great deal, the authors suggest. They are all agreed that the religious press has acquired considerably more technical dash in recent years and that it attracts and publishes excellent writing. Rabbi Silverman sees hopeful signs in the Jewish press that questions like federal aid to parochial schools or the New York Regents Prayer controversy are forcing Jews to reconsider the secular libertarian line they have often taken and to examine "for the first time" the entire problem "of Judaism's relation to the free society." Dr. Marty is heartened by the indifference of educated young Protestants to the small defensive concerns of their elders, by the growing ecumenical spirit in the Protestant press, and by the great courage it has shown on occasion. Mr. Deedy reports that the Catholic press enjoys a good deal more freedom now than it did in even the recent past and that there is hope that the matter of external control is on the way to resolution. In support of his view, he is able to quote with obvious glee the advice of Pope John to Catholic journalists, that they must be prepared "to defend and help defend truth, justice, honesty, even before religion and the Gospel." Indeed, it must be said from the Catholic side, that the late Pope did much to bring about the movement away from polemics in religious writing and to create an atmosphere of increased good feeling—an achievement the more significant insofar as it came about at a time when the dangerous process of "columnization" has gone very far in American life and promises to go even farther. (*Columnization* is the awkward but apparently inevitable term used by Gerhard Lenski to describe the development of separate and parallel societies—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish—within American society and with church affiliation, of all unlikely things, as the basis for division.) Dr. Marty and Rabbi Silverman who stress the Protestant, Jewish, and secular contributions to the creation of an atmosphere of good will, exhibit an admirable awareness of the dangers of "columnization" and of the responsibility of the religious press to counteract them. Professor Lekachman is impressed by how certain magazines have occasionally illuminated national issues by bringing to bear on them ideas not readily available to secular thinkers: *America*'s discussion of federal aid to parochial schools; *Midstream* on the recitation of the Regents Prayer; *Christianity and Crisis* on thermonuclear war. He is grateful, too, for the high literary quality of some of these magazines, COMMENTARY, for example, and for the sense of tragic depth that, for instance, a journal like *Christianity and Crisis* has brought to the discussion of public questions. But pretty plainly, the general record of the religious press has not been of a sort to call for widespread or very strenuous rejoicing. All the writers here agree on that.

I should like to close by offering several brief criticisms of the book. The most serious is that neither Dr. Marty, nor Mr. Deedy, nor Rabbi Silverman faces up to the hard question of whether or not theology really has anything relevant to say about the social and political questions of our time. All three imply that it does, which leaves Professor Lekachman alone in maintaining that he has seen little evidence to support such a view. His own position in the matter seems a shade naïve, for he assumes: (1) that specific programs are to be found in religious revelation or tradition; and (2) that these programs will and must be dramatically different from those offered by secular thinkers. The religious press has not often, it is true, discouraged these assumptions, but they are nonetheless in error. (Since Catholic writers have done their share to perpetuate them, I might point out in this connection that at least one spokesman for the dissenting view is the German Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner, who has specifically and roundly denied that the religious tradition has at its disposal such spectacular programmatic solutions.) Yet the failure of the three religious writers in this volume to discuss how theology can be brought to bear on contemporary secular questions, even while reiterating that it must, appears like an evasion of the central issue. Some of the space given over to the more obvious failings of the religious press—its defensiveness, for instance, about which we have heard a good deal before—might better have been devoted to grappling with this fundamental question.

I WOULD have wished, too, that the analysis and evaluation of the best of these magazines had been carried further at the expense, if necessary, of the lesser ones. If all the authors had confined themselves, as Professor Lekachman does, to *The Christian Century, Christianity and Crisis, The Commonweal, America, Midstream,* and COMMENTARY, analyzing their respective strengths and weaknesses, we might have been able to get a better idea of the shape of the contemporary religious dilemma as a whole. But these reservations notwithstanding, this is a useful

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and candid little volume which provides a fine introduction to the subject.

FROM ED. TO EDUCATION

THE EDUCATION OF AMERICAN TEACHERS. By JAMES BRYANT CONANT. *McGraw-Hill. 275 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by R. S. BAKER

IT IS MAINLY through the guidance of James Bryant Conant that middle America has been coming to terms with current educational predicaments. Every two years or so this good gray missionary of the public interest emerges from the dark regions of the schools with another report of troubles and travails and reassuring reforms. Having hacked his way through the jungle of secondary school curricula and traversed the gulf between slum and suburban schools, he has now come to the very heart of darkness—teacher education.

Dr. Conant and his staff spent one year investigating the teacher-training programs of some seventy-seven representative institutions, and another year studying certification regulations and the state agencies that administer them. He confined himself to the sixteen most populous states, which contain two-thirds of the population and produce about the same proportion of teachers. As the representative of the "broad public" to whom the book is addressed, Conant, with his sure sense of what is *mainly* true, has seen through the various *partis pris* of the educators and their critics, their squabbles over detail. Moreover, he has usefully noted some major areas of consensus—that teachers should hold a baccalaureate degree, that a period of practice teaching is necessary, and that teachers need more and better academic preparation. Beyond that, he perceives some obvious but frequently ignored truths: that most colleges and universities are involved in teacher education; that most "extension" courses and master's degree programs for teachers are a pious fraud; that reform cannot possibly come about through adjusting pat-

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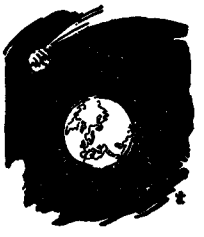

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terns of certification because the system itself is "bankrupt"; and, above all, that judgments can be formed only after a close look at what is going on in a particular state, at a particular level of education, and even within a specific field. His exposition of the involuted relationships among NCATE, TEPS, AACTE, and the NEA is masterful, although I have known and questioned several high officials of these organizations, Conant is the first to bring me any true illumination. *The Education of American Teachers* would be valuable solely because of the amount and reliability of information it contains.

HOWEVER, its primary impact will come from Conant's twenty-seven recommendations, which he regards as an integrated program, so that all of them would have to be adopted to make any major improvement in teacher education. His central recommendation would take certification requirements out of the control of the state departments and give them to the individual colleges. Within this more open and rational framework, teacher training could then undergo a thorough revision. Individual colleges and universities would have complete freedom—and responsibility—for developing their own programs of courses for future teachers, using the resources of the "whole faculty" to provide a core of general education, followed by specialized training. The test of the new curriculum would be the status it achieves in the field and the performance of the students in practice teaching and, ultimately, in their own classroom. The role of the state departments of education would be reduced to such functions as approving practice-teaching arrangements, providing information about school programs and teacher supply, as well as *enforcing* the rule that teachers be assigned exclusively to levels and subjects for which they are adequately prepared. Elementary teachers would prepare—in rather different ways—either for grades K-3 or 4-6; secondary teachers would confine their preparation to a single field. All students would do their practice teaching under the supervision of a "clinical professor" appointed by the colleges for each level (elementary) or subject (secondary). (Small colleges unable to afford an adequate staff of these specialists would be expected to stop preparing teachers.) As usual, Dr. Conant's prescription includes liberal doses of money. In general, Conant wants to set up a more efficient shop with increased specialization and control of standards throughout. In theory at least, his plan would certainly come close to achieving that goal.

ON THE OTHER hand, Conant has ignored a number of important difficulties, sometimes by blandly conscious choice. He refused, for example, to deal with the preparation of teachers of non-academic subjects or of those with administrative functions. Nor does he even acknowledge the existence of, much less the problems posed by, the hordes of ill-trained, poorly motivated teachers who would remain in the schools even if his recommendations were to take nationwide effect tomorrow. Other weaknesses result from this same lack of concreteness; it is difficult to visualize how his notion of the "institutional" endorsement of teachers would be effective in a state university enrolling twenty-five thousand students, or how the concern for institutional "reputation" would create and sustain needed reforms. Academics are usually far more concerned with the interests of their disciplines, departments, or selves than with those of the institution to which they are (often temporarily) attached. His chief idea of shifting the responsibility for determining course requirements for certification from the state departments to the colleges would certainly encourage some of them to experiment, but I suspect that most of the others would dully and cautiously maintain the status quo. As with various foundation-sponsored experiments in education, the net result might be a few teachers produced by model programs, some superficial reforms elsewhere, but little in the way of prompt and sweeping change. Nonetheless, such criticisms mainly raise problems of implementation that are not insoluble, and should not be allowed to obscure the main value of Conant's labors. After all, the book does give us the first really decent word on the subject.

But not the last. Working in a state and a college where many of Conant's recommendations are already in effect, I can say that: (1) they work; and (2) they do not solve the major problem. Inevitably, the very *talents* for quantification and abstraction that fitted Conant for his career as scientist-administrator also partially disqualify him as an educational thinker. Dr. Conant's heavy bias toward the first half of the Society-*vs.*-Individual equation permeates the whole book. His prose warms up only when he is describing an administrative arrangement, and the smell of chalk dust and the echoing playground shout are totally absent. His view of society—and hence of the classroom—is singularly joyless. The school is merely the long track along which the squirming young must pass to be processed and broken to the task of shouldering the burdens of vocation and citizenship. And despite his obligatory bows in the direction of history, Conant seems unable to imagine a future much different from the present or, for that matter, to perceive how the present differs from the past. This even distorts his calculations—his various graphs and tables fail to account for demographic and economic changes that will increasingly influence future education practices. Indeed, Conant's administrative (and dated) cast of mind is quite apparent throughout—even on the very first page, where he introduces the current conflict about teacher education as merely a "power struggle among professors," as though no *ideas* were involved, no commitments beyond crass self-interest.

For that matter, he even has the sides wrong. The real "struggle" is not between the academic Dissenters versus the Established Church of education professors, school administrators, and state department hierarchies. What Conant misses altogether is the arrival of new men, both in subject fields and in professional education, who know and care more about what is happening and should happen in public-school

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classrooms than do either their older colleagues in the same discipline or the traditional educationists. They know that in education today almost everything is up for grabs—and that the issues and victories of yesteryear, with their mounds of accompanying ed. research, are becoming supremely irrelevant. They know that the object of education is to prepare one to meet demands that cannot be foretold at the time of education, as well as to impart some degree of mastery of the symbolic systems —verbal, mathematical, aesthetic— through which we grasp reality now. What Benjamin DeMott has said in these pages about the duty of the college teacher, "to teach new heavens and a new earth, to show his student into the world of Now, to drive himself toward that full consciousness of times which is the only armor left against mere irony or mere wanness," is increasingly becoming conscious in the mind of the younger public-school teacher.

Who would want to enlist in Conant's gray army of Duty? Certainly not the brightest among our future teachers, who, capable of responding to Goodman, Mayer, Friedenberg, Lieberman, *et al.*, look forward to their careers as something intensely personal and hence exciting. They seem to want for themselves the security of technical competence, a grasp of the best new knowledge, and the freedom to take certain psychic risks for themselves and their students. Starting from such a highly personal center they grope cautiously toward each other, toward a new vision of education and thus, perhaps, of American society.

THE school in the coming decades may develop around one of two visions—as a factory or a temple. If the first vision prevails (and it is the more likely one, given Conant's book and its close relation to current trends), we may envision a fragmentation of the teacher's functions, with the more prosaic tasks being taken over by an army of para-pedagogical personnel. "Master" teachers of various grade levels or subjects will head teams of internes, audio-visual technicians, clerks, programmers, and testers, who will efficiently convey masses of information and concepts to masses of pupils. The alternative is to view the school as temple, as a holy place for forming self-determining individuals. The task of the schools would be to lead the individual child through successive encounters with imaginative and dedicated teachers who would give him an increasingly sophisticated picture of reality and some of the equipment for operating within it. The frightening thing about *The Education of American Teachers* is the author's inability even to conceive of the school as a temple, which means that his book can lead only to another half-reform that works to prevent achievement of a full one.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

THEODORE SOLOTAROFF *is an associate editor of* COMMENTARY.

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT'S *collection of essays,* A Piece of Lettuce, *will be published this month by Random House.*

RONALD STEEL'S *most recent contribution was "Fortress America" (August 1963).*

WARREN COFFEY, *a new contributor, is an editor of the Catholic journal,* Ramparts.

R. S. BAKER *is on the faculty of the Oregon College of Education.*

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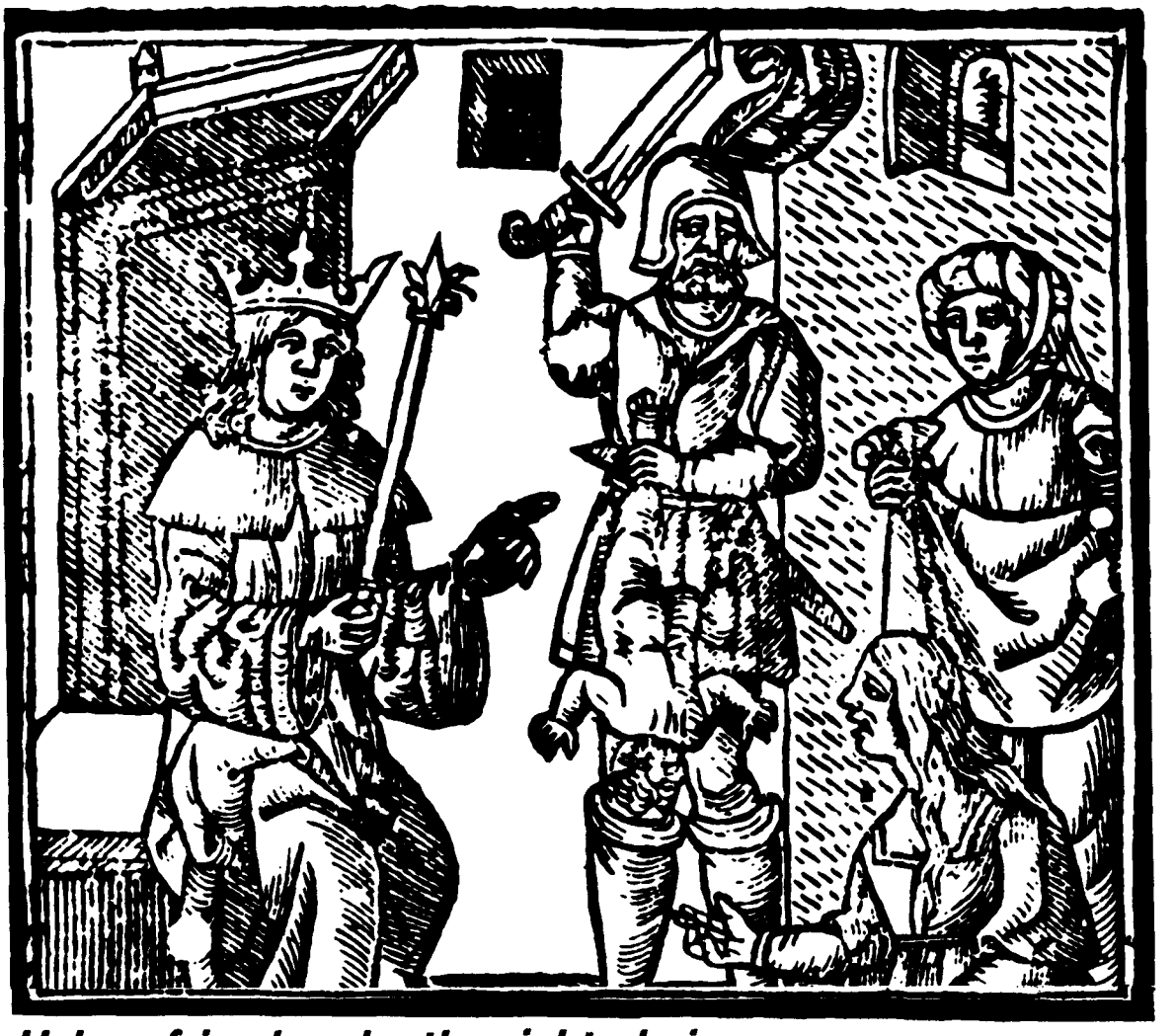

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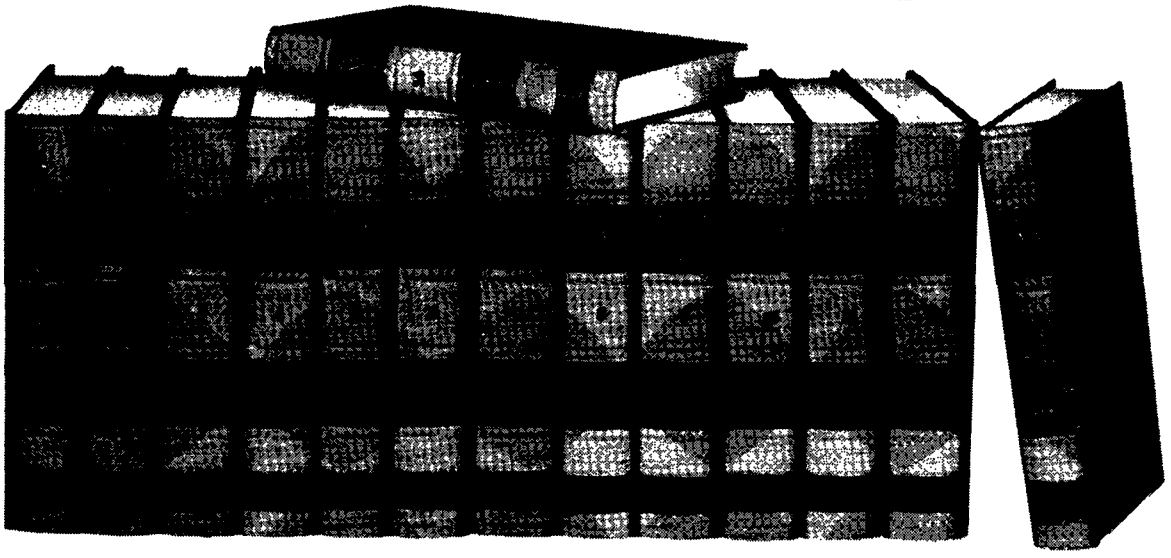

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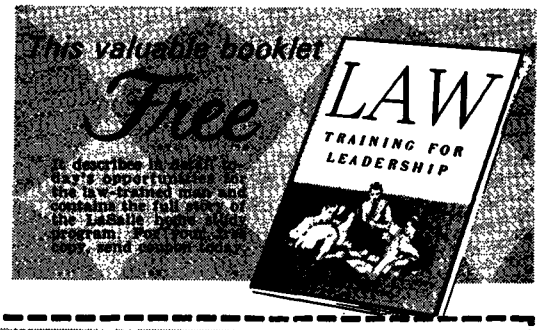

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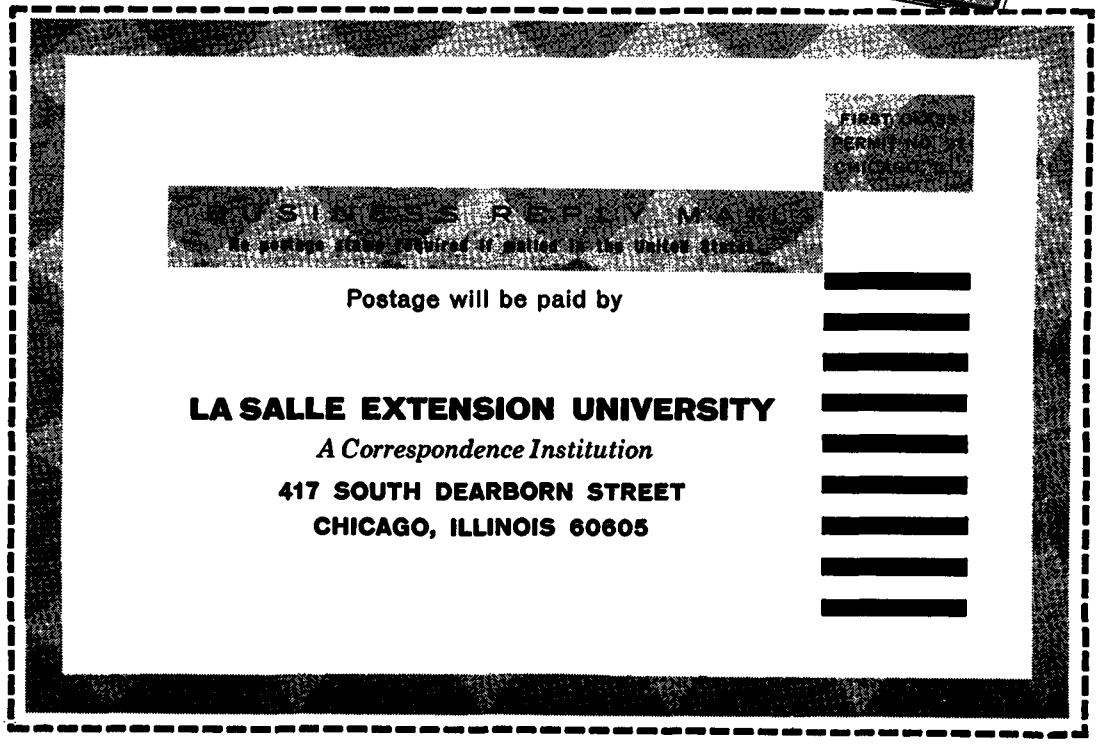

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